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SWINBURNE'S POEMS



THE WORKS
OF
ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE



P O E M S

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

THE issuing of this edition of Swinburne in two volumes, one "Poems" and the other "Tragedies," we feel is really needed. To get the author's works before this time meant either buying the American edition in eleven volumes or collecting the English edition, in more numerous volumes, at even greater expense. The works of all the other standard poets may be had in some compact form for library use, and Swinburne surely should not be neglected. This edition, with the exception of "Rosamund," "Balen," and a few minor poems, is complete.

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POEMS AND BALLADS.

A BALLAD OF LIFE.

I FOUND in dreams a place of wind and
flowers,
Full of sweet trees and color of glad
grass,

In midst whereof there was
A lady clothed like summer with sweet
hours,

Her beauty, fervent as a fiery moon
Made my blood burn and swoon
Like a flame rained upon.

Sorrow had filled her shaken eyelids' blue,
And her mouth's sad red heavy rose all
through
Seemed sad with glad things gone.

She held a little cithren by the strings,
Shaped heartwise, strung with subtle-
colored hair

Of some dead lute player
That in dead years had done delicious
things.

The seven strings were named accordingly :
The first string charity,
The second tenderness,

The rest were pleasure, sorrow, sleep, and
sin,

And loving kindness, that is pity's kin
And is most pitiless.

There were three men with her, each gar-
mented

With gold and shod with gold upon the
feet ;

And with plucked ears of wheat.

The first man's hair was wound upon his
head :

His face was red, and his mouth curled and
sad ;

All his gold garment had

Pale stains of dust and rust.

A riven hood was pulled across his eyes ;
The token of him being upon this wise
Made for a sign of Lust

The next was Shame, with hollow heavy
face

Colored like green wood when flame
kindles it.

He hath such feeble feet

They may not well endure in any place.

His face was full of grey old miseries,
And all his blood's increase

Was even increase of pain.

The last was Fear, that is akin to Death ;

He is Shame's friend, and always as Shame
saith

Fear answers him again.

My soul said in me ; This is marvellous,
Seeing the air's face is not so delicate

Nor the sun's grace so great,

If sin and she be kin or amorous.

And seeing where maidens served her on
their knees,

I bade one crave of these

To know the cause thereof.

Then Fear said : I am Pity that was dead.

And Shame said : I am Sorrow comforted.

And Lust said : I am Love.

Thereat her hands began a lute-playing
And her sweet mouth a song in a strange
to rgue ;

And all the while she sung
There was no sound but long tears follow-
ing

Long tears upon men's faces, waxen white
With extreme sad delight.

But those three following men
Became as men raised up among the dead ;
Great glad mouths open, and fair cheeks
made red

With child's blood come again

Then I said : Now assuredly I see
My lady is perfect, and transfigureth
All sin and sorrow and death,
Making them fair as her own eyelids be.
Or lips wherein my whole soul's life abides ;
Or as her sweet white sides
And bosom carved to kiss.
Now therefore, if her pity further me.

Doubtless for her sake all my days shall be
As righteous as she is.

Forth, ballad, and take roses in both arms.
Even till the top rose touch thee in the
throat

Where the least thornprick harms ;
And girdled in thy golden singing-coat,
Come thou before my lady and say this ;
Borgia, thy gold hair's color burns in
me,

Thy mouth makes beat my blood in
feverish rhymes ;
Therefore so many as these roses be,
Kiss me so many times.

Then it may be, seeing how sweet she is,
That she will stoop herself none other-
wise

Than a blown vine-branch doth,
And kiss thee with soft laughter on thine
eyes,
Ballad, and on thy mouth.

A BALLAD OF DEATH.

KNFEL down, fair Love, and fill thyself
with tears,

Girdle thyself with sighing for a girth
Upon the sides of mirth,
Cover thy lips and eyelids, let thine ears
Be filled with rumor of people sorrowing ;
Make thee soft raiment out of woven sighs
Upon the flesh to cleave,
Set pains therein and many a grievous thing,
And many sorrows after each his wise
For armlet and for gorget and for sleeve,

O Love's lute heard about the lands of death,
Left hanged upon the trees that were
therein ;

O Love and Time and Sin,
Three singing mouths that mourn now
under breath,

Three lovers, each one evil spoken of ;
O smitten lips where through this voice of
mine

Came softer with her praise ;
Abide a little for our lady's love.

The kisses of her mouth were more than
wine,

And more than peace the passage of her
days

O Love, thou knowest if she were good to
see.

O Time, thou shalt not find in any land
Till, cast out of thine hand,
The sunlight and the moonlight fall from
thee,

Another woman fashioned like as this.
O Sin, thou knowest that all thy shame in
her

Was made a goodly thing ;
Yea, she caught Shame and shamed him
with her kiss,

With her fair kiss, and lips much lovelier
Than lips of amorous roses in late spring.

By night there stood over against my bed
Queen Venus with a hood striped gold and
black,

Both sides drawn fully back
From brows wherein the sad blood failed
of red,
And temples drained of purple and full of
death.

Her curled hair had the wave of sea-water
 And the sea's gold in it.
 Her eyes were as a dove's that sickeneth.
 Strewn dust of gold she had shed over her,
 And pearl and purple and amber on her
 feet.

Upon her raiment of dyed sendaline
 Were painted all the secret ways of love
 And covered things thereof.
 That hold delight as grape-flowers hold
 their wine ;
 Red mouth of maidens and red feet of
 doves,
 And brides that kept within the bride-
 chamber
 Their garment of soft shame,
 And weeping faces of the wearied loves
 That swoon in sleep and awake wearier,
 With heat of lips and hair shed out like
 flame.

The tears that through her eyelids fell on
 me
 Made my own bitter where they ran be-
 tween
 As blood had fallen therein,
 She saying ; Arise, lift up thine eyes and
 see
 If any glad thing be or any good
 Now the best thing is taken forth of us ;
 Even she to whom all praise
 Was as one flower in a great multitude,
 One glorious flower of many and glorious,
 One day found gracious among many days ;

Even she whose handmaiden was Love —
 to whom
 At kissing times across her stateliest bed
 Kings bowed themselves and shed
 Pale wine, and honey with the honeycomb,
 And spikenard bruised for a burnt-offering ;
 Even she between whose lips the kiss be-
 came
 As fire and frankincense ;
 Whose hair was as gold raiment on a king,
 Whose eyes were as the morning purged
 with flame,
 Whose eyelids as sweet savor issuing
 thence.
 Then I beheld, and lo on the other side
 My lady's likeness crowned and robed and
 dead.
 Sweet still, but now not red,
 Was the shut mouth whereby men lived and
 died.

And sweet, but emptied of the blood's blue
 shade,
 The great curled eyelids that withheld her
 eyes.

And sweet, but like spoilt gold,
 The weight of color in her tresses weighed.
 And sweet, but as a vesture with new dyes,
 The body that was clothed with love of old.

Ah ! that my tears filled all her woven hair.
 And all the hollow bosom of her gown —
 Ah ! that my tears ran down
 Even to the place where many kisses were,
 Even where her parted breast-flowers have
 place,
 Even where they are cloven apart — who
 knows not this ?
 Ah ! the flowers cleave apart
 And their sweet fills the tender interspace ;
 Ah ! the leaves grown thereof were things
 to kiss
 Ere their fine gold was tarnished at the
 heart

Ah ! in the days when God did good to
 me,
 Each part about her was a righteous thing ;
 Her mouth an almsgiving,
 The glory of her garments charity,
 The beauty of her bosom a good deed,
 In the good days when God kept sight of
 us ;
 Love lay upon her eyes,
 And on that hair whereof the world takes
 heed :
 And all her body was more virtuous
 Than souls of women fashioned otherwise.

Now, ballad, gather poppies in thine hands
 And sheaves of briar and many rusted
 sheaves
 Rain-rotten in rank lands,
 Waste marigold and late unhappy leaves
 And grass that fades ere any of it be mown ;
 And when thy bosom is filled full thereof
 Seek out Death's face ere the light altereth,
 And say " My master that was thrall to
 Love
 Is become thrall to Death."
 Bow down before him, ballad, sigh and
 groan,
 But make no sojourn in thy outgoing ;
 For haply it may be
 That when thy feet return at evening
 Death shall come in with thee.

LAUS VENERIS.

ASLEEP or waking is it? for her neck,
Kissed over close, wears yet a purple speck,
Wherein the pained blood falters and
goes out;
Soft, and stung softly—fairer for a fleck.

But though my lips shut sucking on the
place,
There is no vein at work upon her face;
Her eyelids are so peaceable, no doubt
Deep sleep has warmed her blood through
all its ways.

Lo, this is she that was the world's delight;
The old grey years were parcels of her
might;
The strewings of the ways wherein she
trod
Were the twain seasons of the day and
night.

Lo, she was thus when her clear limbs en-
ticed
All lips that now grow sad with kissing
Christ,
Stained with blood fallen from the feet
of God,
The feet and hands whereat our souls were
priced.

Alas, Lord, surely thou art great and fair.
But lo her wonderfully woven hair!
And thou didst heal us with thy piteous
kiss;
But see now, Lord; her mouth is lovelier.

She is right fair; what hath she done to
thee?
Nay, fair Lord Christ, lift up thine eyes
and see;
Had now thy mother such a lip—like
this?
Thou knowest how sweet a thing it is to me.

Inside the Horsel here the air is hot;
Right little peace one hath for it, God wot;

The scented dusty daylight burns the
air,
And my heart chokes me 'til I hear it not.

Behold, my Venus, my soul's body, lies
With my love laid upon her garment-wise,
Feeling my love in all her limbs and
hair
And shed between her eyelids through her
eyes.

She holds my heart in her sweet open
hands
Hanging asleep; hard by her head there
stands,
Crowned with gilt thorns and clothed
with flesh like fire,
Love, wan as foam blown up the salt burnt
sands—

Hot as the brackish waifs of yellow spume
That shift and steam - loose clots of arid
fume
From the sea's panting mouth of dry
desire;
There stands he, like one laboring at a
loom.

The warp holds fast across; and every
thread
That makes the woof up has dry specks of
red;
Always the shuttle cleaves clean through,
and he
Weaves with the hair of many a ruined
head.

Love is not glad nor sorry, as I deem;
Laboring he dreams, and labors in the
dream,
Till when the spool is finished, lo I see
His web, reeled off, curls and goes out like
steam.

Night falls like fire; the heavy lights run
low,
And as they drop, my blood and body so

Shake as the flame shakes, full of days
and hours
That sleep not neither weep they as they
go.

Ah yet would God this flesh of mine might
be
Where air might wash and long leaves
cover me,
Where tides of grass break into foam of
flowers,
Or where the wind's feet shine along the
sea.

Ah yet would God that stems and roots
were bred
Out of my weary body and my head,
That sleep were sealed upon me with a
seal,
And I were as the least of all his dead.

Would God my blood were dew to feed
the grass,
Mine ears made deaf and mine eyes blind
as glass,
My body broken as a turning wheel,
And my mouth stricken ere it saith Alas!

Ah God, that love were as a flower or flame,
That life were as the naming of a name,
That death were not more pitiful than
desire,
That these things were not one thing and
the same!

Behold now, surely somewhere there is
death:
For each man hath some space of years, he
saith.

A little space of time ere time expire,
A little day, a little way of breath.

And lo, between the sundown and the sun,
His day's work and his night's work are
undone;

And lo, between the nightfall and the
light,
He is not, and none knoweth of such an
one.

Ah God, that I were as all souls that be,
As any herb or leaf of any tree,
As men that toil through hours of labor-
ing night,
As bones of men under the deep sharp sea.

Outside it must be winter among men;
For at the gold bars of the gates again
I heard all night and all the hours of it,
The wind's wet wings and fingers drip with
rain.

Knights gather, riding sharp for cold; I
know
The ways and woods are strangled with the
snow;
And with short song the maidens spin
and sit
Until Christ's birthnight, lily-like, arow.

The scent and shadow shed about me make
The very soul in all my senses ache;
The hot hard night is fed upon my breath,
And sleep beholds me from afar awake.

Alas, but surely where the hills grow deep,
Or where the wild ways of the sea are steep,
Or in strange places somewhere there is
death,
And on death's face the scattered hair of
sleep.

There lover-like with lips and limbs that
meet
They lie, they pluck sweet fruit of life and
eat;
But me the hot and hungry days devour,
And in my mouth no fruit of theirs is sweet.

No fruit of theirs, but fruit of my desire,
For her love's sake whose lips through
mine inspire;
Her eyelids on her eyes like flower on
flower,
Mine eyelids on mine eyes like fire on fire.

So lie we, not as sleep that lies by death,
With heavy kisses and with happy breath;
Not as man lies by woman, when the
bride
Laughs low for love's sake and the words
he saith.

For she lies, laughing low with love; she
lies
And turns his kisses on her lips to sighs,
To sighing sound of lips unsatisfied,
And the sweet tears are tender with her
eyes.

Ah, not as they, but as the souls that were

Slain in the old time, having found her fair;
 Who, sleeping with her lips upon their
 eyes,
 Heard sudden serpents hiss across her hair.

Their blood runs round the roots of time
 like rain:

She casts them forth and gathers them
 again;

With nerve and bone she weaves and
 multiplies

Exceeding pleasure out of extreme pain.

Her little chambers drip with flower-like
 red,

Her girdles, and the chaplets of her head,
 Her armlets and her anklets; with her
 feet,

She tramples all that winepress of the dead.

Her gateways smoke with fume of flowers
 and fires,

With loves burnt out and unassuaged de-
 sires;

Between her lips the steam of them is
 sweet,

The langor in her ears of many lyres.

Her beds are full of perfume and sad sound,
 Her doors are made with music and barred
 round

With sighing and with laughter and with
 tears,

With tears whereby strong souls of men are
 bound.

There is the knight Adonis that was slain,
 With flesh and blood she chains him for a
 chain;

The body and the spirit in her ears
 Cry, for her lips divide him vein by vein.

Yea, all she slayeth; yea, every man save
 me;

Me, love, thy lover that must cleave to
 thee

Till the ending of the days and ways of
 earth,

The shaking of the sources of the sea.

Me, most forsaken of all souls that fell;

Me, satiated with things insatiable;

Me, for whose sake the extreme hell
 makes mirth,

Yea, laughter kindles at the heart of hell.

Alas thy beauty! for thy mouth's sweet
 sake

My soul is bitter to me, my limbs quake

As water as the flesh of men that weep,
 As their heart's vein whose heart goes nigh
 to break.

Ah God, that sleep with flower-sweet finger-
 tips

Would crush the fruit of death upon my
 lips;

Ah, God, that death would tread the
 grapes of sleep

And wring their juice upon me as it drips.

There is no change of cheer for many days,
 But change of chimes high up in the air,
 that sways

Rung by the running fingers of the wind;
 And singing sorrows heard on hidden ways.

Day smiteth day in twain, night sundereth
 night,

And on mine eyes the dark sits as the light;
 Yea, Lord, thou knowest I know not,

having sinned,
 If heaven be clean or unclean in thy sight.

Yea, as if earth were sprinkled over me,
 Such chafed harsh earth as chokes a sandy
 sea,

Each pore doth yearn, and the dried
 blood thereof

Gasps by sick fits, my heart swims heavily.

There is a feverish famine in my veins;
 Below her bosom, where a crushed grape
 stains

The white and blue, there my lips caught
 and clove

An hour since, and what mark of me re-
 mains?

I dare not always touch her, lest the kiss
 Leave my lips charred. Yea, Lord, a lit-
 tle bliss,

Brief bitter bliss, one hath for a great sin;
 Nathless thou knowest how sweet a thing
 it is.

Sin, is it sin whereby men's souls are thrust
 Into the pit? yet had I a good trust

To save my soul before it slipped therein,
 Trod under by the fire-shod feet of lust.

For if mine eyes fail and my soul takes
breath,
I look between the iron sides of death
Into sad hell where all sweet love hath
end,
All but the pain that never finisheth.

There are the naked faces of great kings,
The singing folk with all their lute-playings;
There when one cometh he shall have to
friend
The grave that covets and the worm that
clings.

There sit the knights that were so great of
hand,
The ladies that were queens of fair green
land,
Grown grey and black now, brought
unto the dust,
Soiled, without raiment, clad about with
sandr.

There is one end for all of them; they sit
Naked and sad, they drink the dregs of it,
Trodden as grapes in the wine-press of
lust,
Trampled and trodden by the fiery feet.

I see the marvellous mouth whereby there
fell
Cities and people whom the gods loved
well,
Yet for her sake on them the fire gat hold,
And for their sakes on her the fire of hell.

And softer than the Egyptian lote-leaf is,
The queen whose face was worth the world
to kiss,
Wearing at breast a suckling snake of
gold;
And large pale lips of strong Semiramis.

Curled like a tiger's that curl back to feed;
Red only where the last kiss made them
bleed;
Her hair most thick with many a carven
gem,
Deep in the mane, great-chested, like a
steed.

Yea, with red sin the faces of them shine:
But in all these there was no sin like mine;
No, not in all the strange great sins of
them

That made the wine-press froth and foam
with wine.

For I was of Christ's choosing, I God's
knight,
No blinkard heathen stumbling for scant
light;
I can well see, for all the dusty days
Gone past, the clean great time of goodly
fight.

I smell the breathing battle sharp with
blows,
With shriek of shafts and snapping short
of bows;
The fair pure sword smites out in subtle
ways,
Sounds and long lights are shed between
the rows

Of beautiful mailed men; the edged light
slips,
Most like a snake that takes short breath
and dips
Sharp from the beautifully bending head,
With all its gracious body lithe as lips

That curl in touching you; right in this
wise
My sword doth, seeming fire in mine own
eyes,
Leaving all colors in them brown and red
And flecked with death; then the keen
breaths like sighs,

The caught-up choked dry laughters follow-
ing them,
When all the fighting face is grown a flame
For pleasure, and the pulse that stuns
the ears,
And the heart's gladness of the goodly
game.

Let me think yet a little; I do know
These things were sweet, but sweet such
years ago,
Their savor is all turned now into tears;
Yea, ten years since, where the blue rip-
ples blow,

The blue curled eddies of the blowing
Rhine,
I felt the sharp wind shaking grass and
vine

Touch my blood, too, and sting me with
delight
Through all this waste and weary body of
mine

That never feels clear air; right gladly then
I rode alone, a great way off my men,
And heard the chiming bridle snite and
smite.
And gave each rhyme thereof some rhyme
again,

Till my song shifted to that iron one:
Seeing there rode up between me and the
sun
Some certain of my foe's men, for his
three
White wolves across their painted coats did
run.

The first red-bearded, with square cheeks—
alack,
I made my knave's blood turn his beard to
black;
The slaying of him was a joy to see:
Perchance too, when at night he came not
back,

Some woman fell a-weeping, whom this
thief
Would beat when he had drunken; yet
small grief
Hath any for the ridding of such knaves;
Yea, if one wept, I doubt her teen was
brief.

This bitter love is sorrow in all lands,
Draining of eyelids, wringing of drenched
hands,
Sighing of hearts and filling up of graves;
A sign across the head of the world he
stands,

As one that hath a plague-mark on his
brows;
Dust and spilt blood do track him to his
house
Down under earth; sweet smells of lip and
cheek,
Like a sweet snake's breath made more
poisonous

With chewing of some perfumed deadly
grass,
Are shed all round his passage if he pass,

And their quenched savor leaves the
whole soul weak,
Sick with keen guessing whence the per-
fume was.

As one who hidden in deep sedge and reeds
Smells the rare scent made where a panther
feeds,
And tracking ever slotwise the warm
smell
Is snapped upon by the sweet mouth and
bleeds,

His head far down the hot sweet throat of
her—
So one tracks love, whose breath is deadlier,
And lo, one springé and you are fast in
hell,
Fast as the gin's grip of a wayfarer.

I think now, as the heavy hours deace
One after one, and bitter thoughts increase
One upon one, of all sweet finished things;
The breaking of the battle; the long peace

Wherein we sat clothed softly, each man's
hair
Crowned with green leaves beneath white
hoods of vair;
The sounds of sharp spears at great
tourneyings,
And noise of singing in the late sweet air.

I sang of love too, knowing nought thereof;
"Sweeter," I said, "the little laugh of
love
Than tears out of the eyes of Magdalen,
Or any fallen feather of the Dove.

"The broken little laugh that spoils a kiss,
The ache of purple pulses, and the bliss
Of blinded eyelids that expand again—
Love draws them open with those lips of
his,

"Lips that cling hard till the kissed face
has grown
Of one same fire and color with their own;
Then ere one sleep, appeased with
sacrifice,
Where his lips wounded, there his lips
atone."

I sang these things long since and knew
them not;

"Lo, here is love, or there is love, God
wot,
This man and that finds favor in his
eyes,"
I said, "but I, what guerdon have I got ?

"The dust of praise that is blown every-
where
In all men's faces with the common air;
The bay-leaf that wants chafing to be
sweet
Before they wind it in a singer's hair."

So that one dawn I rode forth sorrowing;
I had no hope but of some evil thing,
And so rode slowly past the windy wheat,
And past the vineyard and the water-spring,

Up to the Horsel. A great elder-tree
Held back its heaps of flowers to let me
see
The ripe tall grass, and one that walked
therein,
Naked, with hair shed over to the knee.

She walked between the blossom and the
grass;
I knew the beauty of her, what she was,
The beauty of her body and her sin,
And in my flesh the sin of hers, alas !

Alas ! for sorrow is all the end of this.
O sad kissed mouth, how sorrowful it is !
O breast whereat some suckling sorrow
clings,
Red with the bitter blossom of a kiss !

Ah, with blind lips I felt for you, and
found
About my neck your hands and hair en-
wound,
The hands that stifle and the hair that
stings,
I felt them fasten sharply without sound.

Yea, for my sin I had great store of bliss
Rise up, make answer for me, let thy kiss
Seal my lips hard from speaking of my
sin,
Lest one go mad to hear how sweet it is.

Yet I waxed faint with fume of barren
bowers,

And murmuring of the heavy-headed hours;
And let the dove's beak fret and peck
within
My lips in vain, and Love shed fruitless
flowers.

So that God looked upon me when your
hands
Were hot about me; yea, God brake my
hands
To save my soul alive, and I came forth
Like a man blind and naked in strange
lands

That hears men laugh and weep, and
knows not whence
Nor wherefore, but is broken in his sense;
Howbeit I met folk riding from the north
Towards Rome, to purge them of their
souls' offence.

And rode with them, and spake to none ;
the day
Stunned me like lights upon some wizard
way,
And ate like fire mine eyes and mine
eyesight ;

So rode I, hearing all these chant and pray,
And marvelled; till before us rose and fell
White curved hills, like outer skirts of hell
Seen where men's eyes look through the
day to night,
Like a jagged shell's lips, harsh, untunable,

Blown in between by devils' wrangling
breath;
Nathless we won well past that hell and
death,
Down to the sweet land where all airs
are good,
Even unto Rome where God's grace tarrieth.

Then came each man and worshipped at his
knees
Who in the Lord God's likeness bears the
keys
To bind or loose, and called on Christ's
shed blood,
And so the sweet-souled father gave him
case.

But when I came I fell down at his feet,
Saying, "Father, though the Lord's blood
be right sweet,

The spot it takes not off the panther's
skin,
Nor shall an Ethiop's stain be bleached with
it.

"Lo, I have sinned and have spat out at
God,
Wherefore his hand is heavier and his rod
More sharp because of mine exceeding
sin,
And all his raiment redder than bright
blood

"Before mine eyes; yea, for my sake I wot
The heat of hell is waxen seven times hot
Through my great sin." Then spake he
some sweet word,
Giving me cheer; which thing availed me
not;

Yea, scarce I wist if such indeed were said;
For when I ceased—lo, as one newly dead
Who hears a great cry out of hell, I heard
The crying of his voice across my head.

"Until this dry shred staff, that hath no
whit
Of leaf nor bark, bear blossom and smell
sweet,
Seek thou not any mercy in God's sight
For so long shalt thou be cast out from it."

Yea, what if dried-up stems wax red and
green,
Shall that thing be which is not nor has
been?

Yea, what if sapless bark was green and
white,
Shall any good fruit grow upon my sin?

Nay, though sweet fruit were plucked of a
dry tree,
And though men drew sweet waters of the
sea,

There should not grow sweet leaves on
this dead stem,
This waste wan body and shaken soul of
me.

Yea, though God search it warily enough,
There is not one sound thing in all thereof;
Though he search all my veins through,
searching them
He shall find nothing whole therein but
love.

For I came home right heavy, with small
cheer,
And lo my love, mine own soul's heart,
more dear
Than mine own soul, more beautiful
than God,
Who hath my being between the hands of
her—

Fair still, but fair for no man saving me,
As when she came out of the naked sea
Making the foam as fire whereon she
trod,
And as the inner flower of fire was she.

Yea, she laid nold upon me, and her mouth
Clove unto mine as soul to body doth,
And, laughing, made her lips luxurious;
Her hair had smells of all the sunburnt
south,

Strange spice and flower, strange savor of
crushed fruit
And perfume the swart kings tread under-
foot
For pleasure when their minds wax
amorous,
Charred frankincense and grated sandal-
root.

And I forgot fear and all weary things,
All ended prayers and perished thanks-
givings,
Feeling her face with all her eager hair
Cleave to me, clinging as a fire that clings

To the body and to the raiment, burning
them;
As after death I know that such-like flame
Shall cleave to me for ever; yea, what
care,
Albeit I burn then, having felt the same?

Ah love, there is no better life than this;
To have known love, how bitter a thing it is,
And afterward be cast out of God's sight;
Yea, these that know not, shall they have
such bliss

High up in barren heaven before his face
As we twain in the heavy-hearted place,
Remembering love and all the dead de-
light,
And all that time was sweet with for a
space?

For till the thunder in the trumpet be,
Soul may divide from body, but not we
One from another; I hold thee with my
hand,
I let mine eyes have all their will of thee,

I seal myself upon thee with my might,
Abiding alway out of all men's sight
Until God loosen over sea and land
The thunder of the trumpets of the night,
EXPLICIT LAUS VENERIS.

PHÆDRA.

HIPPOLYTUS; PHÆDRA: CHORUS OF TRÆZENIAN WOMEN.

HIPPOLYTUS.

LAY not thine hand upon me; let me go:
Take off thine eyes that put the gods to
shame;
What, wilt thou turn my loathing to thy
death?

PHÆDRA.

Nay, I will never loosen hold nor breathe
Till thou have slain me; godlike for great
brows
Thou art, and thewed as gods are, with
clear hair:
Draw now thy sword and smite me as thou
art god,
For verily I am smitten of other gods,
Why not of thee?

CHORUS.

O queen, take heed of words;
Why wilt thou eat the husk of evil speech?
Wear wisdom for that veil about thy head
And goodness for the binding of thy brows.

PHÆDRA.

Nay, but this god hath cause enow to smite;
If he will slay me, baring breast and
throat,
I lean toward the stroke with silent mouth
And a great heart. Come, take thy sword
and slay;
Let me not starve between desire and death,
But send me on my way with glad wet lips;
For in the vein-drawn ashen-colored palm
Death's hollow hand holds water of sweet
draught

To dip and slake dried mouths at, as a deer
Specked red from thorns laps deep and
loses pain.

Yea, if my mine own blood ran upon my
mouth,

I would drink that. Nay, but be swift
with me;

Set thy sword here between the girdle and
breast

For I shall grow a poison if I live.

Are not my cheeks as grass, my body pale,
And my breath like a dying poisoned man's?
O whatsoever of godlike names thou be,
By thy chief name I charge thee, thou
strong god,

And bid thee slay me. Strike, up to the
gold,

Up to the hand-grip of the hilt; strike
here;

For I am Cretan of my birth; strike now;
For I am Theseus' wife; stab up to the rims,
I am born daughter to Pasiphae.

See thou spare not for greatness of my
blood,

Nor for the shining letters of my name:
Make thy sword sure inside thine hand and
smite,

For the bright writing of my name is black,
And I am sick with hating the sweet sun.

HIPPOLYTUS

Let not this woman wail and cleave to me,
That am no part of the god's wrath with
her;
Loose ye her hands from me lest she take
hurt.

CHORUS.

Lady, this speech and majesty are twain;
Pure shame is of one counsel with the gods.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Man is as beast when shame stands off
from him.

PHÆDRA.

Man, what have I to do with shame or
thee?

I am not of one counsel with the gods.
I am their kin, I have strange blood in me,
I am not of their likeness nor of thine:

My veins are mixed, and therefore am I
mad,

Yea therefore chafe and turn on mine own
flesh,

Half a woman made with half a god.
But thou wast hewn out of an iron womb
And fed with molten mother-snow for
milk.

A sword was nurse of thine; Hippolyta,
That had the spear to father, and the axe
To bridesman, and wet blood of sword-
slain men

For wedding-water out of a noble well,
Even she did bear thee, thinking of a sword,
And thou wast made a man mistakenly.

Nay, for I love thee, I will have thy hands,
Nay, for I will not loose thee, thou art
sweet,

Thou art my son, I am thy father's wife,
I ache toward thee with a bridal blood,
The pulse is heavy in all my married veins,
My whole face beats, I will feed full of
thee,

My body is empty of ease, I will be fed,
I am burnt to the bone with love, thou
shalt not go,

I am heartsick, and mine eyelids prick
mine eyes,

Thou shalt not sleep nor eat nor say a
word

Till thou hast slain me. I am not good to
live.

CHORUS.

This is an evil born with all its teeth,
When love is cast out of the bound of love.

HIPPOLYTUS.

There is no hate that is so hateful.

PHÆDRA

I pray thee turn that hate of thine my way,
I hate not it nor anything of thine.

Lo, maidens, how he burns about the brow,
And draws the chafing sword-strap down
his hand.

What wilt thou do? wilt thou be worse
than death?

Be but as sweet as is the bitterest,
The most spiteous out of all the gods,
I am well pleased. Lo, do I crave so
much?

I do but bid thee be unmerciful,
Even the one thing thou art. Pity me not.
Thou wert not quick to pity. Think of me

As of a thing thy hounds are keen upon
In the wet woods between the windy ways,
And slay me for a spoil. This body of
mine

Is worth a wild beast's fell or hide of hair,
And spotted deeper than a panther's grain.

I were but dead if thou wert pure indeed;
I pray thee by thy cold green holy crown
And by the fillet-leaves of Artemis.

Nay, but thou wilt not. Death is not like
thee,

Albeit men hold him worst of all the gods.
For of all gods Death only loves not gifts,*
Nor with burnt-offering nor blood-sacrifice
Shalt thou do ought to get thee grace of
him;

He will have nought of altar and altar-song,
And from him only of all the lords in
heaven

Persuasion turns a sweet averted mouth.
But thou art worse: from thee with baffled
breath

Back on my lips my prayer falls like a blow,
And beats upon them, dumb. What shall
I say?

There is no word I can compel thee with
To do me good and slay me. But take
heed;

I say, be wary; look between thy feet,
Lest a snare take them though the ground
be good.

HIPPOLYTUS.

Shame may do most where fear is found
most weak:

* Æsch. Fr. Niobe :—

μόνος θεῶν γὰρ θάνατος οὐ δῶρων ἐργῶ, π.
τ. λ.

That which for shame's sake yet I have not
done,
Shall it be done for fears? Take thine own
way;
Better the foot slip than the whole soul
swerve.

PHÆDRA.

The man is choice and exquisite of mouth;
Yet in the end a curse shall curdle it.

CHORUS.

He goes with cloak upgathered to the lip,
Holding his eye as with some ill in sight.

PHÆDRA.

A bitter ill he hath i' the way thereof,
And it shall burn the sight out as with fire.

CHORUS.

Speak no such word whereto mischance is
kin.

PHÆDRA.

Out of my heart and by fate's leave I speak.

CHORUS.

Set not thy heart to follow after fate.

PHÆDRA.

O women, O sweet people of this land,
O goodly city and pleasant ways thereof,
And woods with pasturing grass and great
well-heads,
And hills with light and night between
your leaves,
And winds with sound and silence in your
lips,
And earth and water and all immortal
things,
I take you to my witness what I am.
There is a god about me like as fire,
Sprung whence, who knoweth, or who
hath heart to say?
A god more strong than whom slain beasts
can soothe,
Or honey, or any spilt of blood-like wine,
Nor shall one please him with a whitened
brow
Nor wheat nor wool nor aught of plaited
leaf.

For like my mother am I stung and slain,
And round my cheeks have such red
malady

And on my lips such fire and foam as hers.
This is that Atë out of Amathus
That breeds up death and gives it one for
love.

She hath slain mercy, and for dead mercy's
sake
(Being frightened with this sister that was
slain)

Flees from before her fearful-footed shame,
And will not bear the bending of her brows
And long soft arrows flown from under
them

As from bows bent. Desire flows out of
her

As out of lips doth speech: and over her
Shines fire, and round her and beneath her
fire.

She hath sown pain and plague in all our
house,

Love loathed of love, and mates unmatch-
able,

Wild wedlock, and the lusts that bleat or
low,

And marriage-fodder snuffed about of kine.
Lo how the heifer runs with leaping flank
Sleek under shaggy and speckled lies of
hair,

And chews a horrible lip, and with harsh
tongue

Laps alien froth and licks a loathlier mouth.

Alas, a foul first steam of trodden tares,

And fouler of these late grapes underfoot.

A bitter way of waves and clean-cut foam

Over the sad road of sonorous sea

The high gods gave king Theseus for no

love,

Nay, but for love, yet to no loving end.

Alas the long thwarts and the fervent oars,

And blown hard sails that straightened the

scant rope!

There were no strong pools in the hollow
sea

To drag at them and suck down side and
beak,

No wind to catch them in the teeth and
hair,

No shoal, no shallow among the roaring
reefs,

No gulf whereout the straining tides throw
spars,

No surf where white bones twist like
whirled white fire.

But like to death he came with death, and
sought
And slew and spoiled and gat him that he
would.
For death, for marriage, and for child-
getting,
I set my curse against him as a sword;
Yea, and the severed half thereof I leave
Pittheus, because he slew not (when that
face
Was tender, and the life still soft in it)

The small swathed child, but bred him
for my fate.
I would I had been the first that took her
death
Out from between wet hools and reddened
teeth,
Splashed horns, fierce fetlocks of the
brother bull!
For now shall I take death a deadlier way;
Gathering it up between the feet of love
Or off the knees of murder reaching it.

THE TRIUMPH OF TIME.

BEFORE our lives divide for ever,
While time is with us and hands are
free,
(Time, swift to fasten and swift to sever
Hand from hand, as we stand by the sea)
I will say no word that a man might say
Whose whole life's love goes down in a
day;
For this could never have been; and never,
Though the gods and the years relent,
shall be.

Is it worth a tear, is it worth an hour,
To think of things that are well outworn?
Of fruitless husk and fugitive flower,
The dream foregone and the deed for-
borne?
Though joy be done with and grief be vain,
Time shall not sever us wholly in twain;
Earth is not spoilt for a single shower;
But the rain has ruined the ungrown corn.

It will grow not again, this fruit of my heart,
Smitten with sunbeams, ruined with rain.
The singing seasons divide and depart
Winter and summer depart in twain.
It will grow not again, it is ruined at root,
The bloodlike blossom, the dull red fruit;
Though the heart yet sickens, the lips yet
smart,
With sullen savor of poisonous pain.

I have given no man of my fruit to eat;
I trod the grapes, I have drunken the
wine.
Had you eaten and drunken and found it
sweet,
This wild new growth of the corn and
vine,
This wine and bread without lees or leaven.
We had grown as gods, as the gods in
heaven,
Souls fair to look upon, goodly to greet,
One splendid spirit, your soul and mine.

In the change of years, in the coil of things,
In the clamor and rumor of life to be
We, drinking love as the furthest springs,
Covered with love at a covering tree,
We had grown as gods, as the gods above,
Filled from the heart to the lips with love,
Held fast in his hands, clothed warm with
his wings,
O love, my love had you loved but me!

We had stood as the sure stars stand, and
moved
As the moon moves, loving the world;
and seen
Grief collapse as a thing disproved,
Death consume as a thing unclean,
Twain halves of a perfect heart, made fast,
Soul to soul while the years fell past;

Had you loved me once, as you have not
loved;

Had the chance been with us that has
not been.

I have put my days and dreams out of mind,
Days that are over, dreams that are done.
Though we seek life through, we shall
surely find

There is none of them clear to us now,
not one.

But clear are these things; the grass and
the sand,

Where, sure as the eyes reach, ever at hand,
With lips wide open and face burnt blind,
The strong sea-daisies feast on the sun.

The low downs lean to the sea; the stream,
One loose thin pulseless tremulous vein,
Rapid and vivid and dumb as a dream,

Works downward, sick of the sun and
the rain;

No wind is rough with the rank rare
flowers;

The sweet sea, mother of loves and hours,
Shudders and shines as the grey winds
gleam,

Turning her smile to a fugitive pain.

Mother of loves that are swift to fade,
Mother of mutable winds and hours.

A barren mother, a mother-maid,
Cold and clean as her faint salt flowers.

I would we twain were even as she,
Lost in the night and the light of the sea,
Where faint sounds falter and wan beams
wade,

Break, and are broken, and shed into
showers.

The loves and hours of the life of a man,
They are swift and sad, being born of
the sea.

Hours that rejoice and regret for a span,
Born with a man's breath, mortal as he;
Loves that are lost ere they come to birth,
Weeds of the wave, without fruit upon
earth.

I lose what I long for, save what I can,
My love, my love, and no love for me!

It is not much that a man can save
On the sands of life, in the straits of time,
Who swims in sight of the great third
wave

That never a swimmer shall cross or
climb.

Some waif washed up with the strays and
spars

That ebb-tide shows to the shore and the
stars;

Weed from the water, grass from a grave.
A broken blossom, a ruined rhyme,

There will no man do for your sake, I
think,

What I would have done for the least
word said.

I had wrung life dry for your lips to drink,
Broken it up for your daily bread :

Body for body and blood for blood,
As the flow of the full sea risen to flood

That yearns and trembles before it sink,
I had given, and lain down for you, glad
and dead.

Yea, hope at highest and all her fruit.

And time at fullest and all his dower,

I had given you surely, and life to boot,
Were we once made one for a single
hour.

But now, you are twain, you are cloven
apart,

Flesh of his flesh, but heart of my heart;

And deep in one is the bitter root,
And sweet for one is the lifelong flower.

To have died if you cared I should die for
you, clung

To my life if you bade me, played my
part

As it pleased you—these were the thoughts
that stung,

The dreams that smote with a keener
dart

Than shafts of love or arrows of death;

These were but as fire is, dust or breath,

Or poisonous foam on the tender tongue
Of the little snakes that eat my heart.

I wish we were dead together to-day,

Lost sight of, hidden away out of sight,
Clasped and clothed in the cloven clay,

Out of the world's way, out of the light,

Out of the ages of worldly weather,

Forgotten of all men altogether,
As the world's first dead, taken wholly
away.

Made one with death, filled full of the
night.

How we should slumber, how we should sleep,

Far in the dark with the dreams and the dews!

And dreaming, grow to each other, and weep,

Laugh low, live softly, murmur and muse;
Yea, and it may be, struck through by the dream,

Feel the dust quicken and quiver, and seem
Alive as of old to the lips, and leap

Spirit to spirit as lovers use.

Sick dreams and sad of a dull delight;

For what shall it profit when men are dead

To have dreamed, to have loved with the whole soul's might,

To have looked for day when the day was fled?

Let come what will, there is one thing worth,

To have had fair love in the life upon earth:

To have held love safe till the day grew night,

While skies had color and lips were red.

Would I lose you now? would I take you then,

If I lose you now that my heart has need?

And come what may after death to men,
What thing worth this will the dead years breed?

Lose life, lose all; but at least I know,
O sweet life's love, having loved you so,
Had I reached you on earth, I should lose not again,

In death nor life, nor in dream or deed.

Yea, I know this well: were you once sealed mine,

Mine in the blood's beat, mine in the breath,

Mixed into me as honey in wine,

Not time that sayeth and gainsayeth,
Nor all strong things had severed us then;
Not wrath of gods, nor wisdom of men,
Nor all things earthly, nor all divine,

Nor joy nor sorrow, nor life nor death.

I had grown pure as the dawn and the dew,
You had grown strong as the sun or the sea.

But none shall triumph a whole life through:

For death is one, and the fates are three.

At the door of life, by the gate of breath,
There are worse things waiting for men than death;

Death could not sever my soul and you,
As these have severed your soul from me.

You have chosen and clung to the chance they sent you,

Life sweet as perfume and pure as prayer.
But will it not one day in heaven repent you?

Will they solace you wholly, the days that were?

Will you lift up your eyes between sadness and bliss,

Meet mine, and see where the great love is,
And tremble and turn and be changed? Content you;

The gate is strait; I shall not be there.

But you, had you chosen, had you stretched hand,

Had you seen good such a thing were done,

I too might have stood with the souls that stand

In the sun's sight, clothed with the light of the sun;

But who now on earth need care how I live?

Have the high gods anything left to give,
Save dust and laurels and gold and sand?

Which gifts are goodly; but I will none.

O all fair lovers about the world,

There is none of you, none, that shall comfort me.

My thoughts are as dead things, wrecked and whirled

Round and round in a gulf of the sea;
And still, through the sound and the straining stream,

Through the coil and chafe, they gleam in a dream,

The bright fine lips so cruelly curled,

And strange swift eyes where the soul sits free.

Free, without pity, withheld from woe,
Ignorant; fair as the eyes are fair.

Would I have you change now, change at a blow,

Startled and stricken, awake and aware?

Yea, if I could, would I have you see
 My very love of you filling me,
 And know my soul to the quick, as I know
 The likeness and look of your throat and
 hair?

I shall not change you. Nay, though I
 might,
 Would I change my sweet one love with
 a word?

I had rather your hair should change in a
 night,
 Clear now as the plume of a black bright
 bird;

Your face fail suddenly, cease, turn grey,
 Die as a leaf that dies in a day.
 I will keep my soul in a place out of sight,
 Far off, where the pulse of it is not heard.

Far off it walks, in a bleak blown space,
 Full of the sound of the sorrow of years.
 I have woven a veil for the weeping face,
 Whose lips have drunken the wine of
 tears;

I have found a way for the failing feet,
 A place for slumber and sorrow to meet;
 There is no rumor about the place,
 Nor light, nor any that sees or hears.

I have hidden my soul out of sight, and
 said

"Let none take pity upon thee, none
 Comfort thy crying: for lo, thou art dead,
 Lie still now, safe out of sight of the sun.
 Have I not built thee a grave, and wrought
 Thy grave-clothes on thee of grievous
 thought,

With soft spun verses and tears unshed,
 And sweet light visions of things undone?

"I have given thee garments and balm
 and myrrh,

And gold, and beautiful burial things.

But thou, be at peace now, make no stir;

Is not thy grave as a royal king's?

Fret not thyself though the end were sore;

Sleep, be patient, vex me no more.

Sleep; what hast thou to do with her?

The eyes that weep, with the mouth that
 sings?"

Where the dead red leaves of the years lie
 rotten,

The cold old crimes and the deeds thrown
 by,

The misconceived and the misbegotten,
 I would find a sin to do ere I die,
 Sure to dissolve and destroy me all through,
 That would set you higher in heaven, serve
 you

And leave you happy, when clean forgot-
 ten,
 As a dead man out of mind, am I.

Your lithe hands draw me, your face burns
 through me,

I am swift to follow you, keen to see;
 But love lacks might to redeem or undo me,
 As I have been, I know I shall surely be;
 "What should such fellows as I do?"

Nay,
 My part were worse if I chose to play;
 For the worst is this after all; if they knew
 me,
 Not a soul upon earth would pity me.

And I play not for pity of these; but you,
 If you saw with your soul what man
 am I,

You would praise me at least that my soul
 all through

Clove to you, loathing the lives that lie;
 The souls and lips that are bought and sold,
 The smiles of silver and kisses of gold,
 The lapdog loves that whine as they chew,
 The little lovers that curse and cry.

There are fairer women, I hear; that may
 be.

But I, that I love you and find you fair,
 Who are more than fair in my eyes if they
 be,

Do the high gods know or the great
 gods care?

Though the swords in my heart for one
 were seven,

Would the iron hollow of doubtful heaven,
 That knows not itself whether night-time
 or day be,

Reverberate words and a foolish prayer?

I will go back to the great sweet mother,
 Mother and lover of men, the sea.

I will go down to her, I and none other,
 Close with her, kiss her and mix her
 with me;

Cling to her, strive with her, hold her fast;
 O fair white mother, in days long past
 Born without sister, born without brother,
 Set free my soul as thy soul is free.

O fair green-girdled mother of mine,
 Sea, that art clothed with the sun and
 the rain,
 Thy sweet hard kisses are strong like wine,
 Thy large embraces are keen like pain.
 Save me and hide me with all thy waves,
 Find me one grave of thy thousand graves,
 Those pure cold populous graves of thine,
 Wrought without hand in a world with-
 out stain.

I shall sleep, and move with the moving
 ships,
 Change as the winds change, veer in the
 tide;
 My lips will feast on the foam of thy lips,
 I shall rise with thy rising, with thee
 subside;
 Sleep, and not know if she be, if she were,
 Filled full with life to the eyes and hair,
 As a rose is fulfilled to the roseleaf tips
 With splendid summer and perfume and
 pride.

This woven raiment of nights and days,
 Were it once cast off and unwound from
 me,
 Naked and glad would I walk in thy ways,
 Alive and aware of thy ways and thee;
 Clear of the whole world, hidden at home,
 Clothed with the green and crowned with
 the foam,
 A pulse of the life of thy straits and bays,
 A vein in the heart of the streams of the
 sea.

Fair mother, fed with the lives of men,
 Thou art subtle and cruel of heart, men
 say
 Thou hast taken, and shalt not render
 again;
 Thou art full of thy dead, and cold as
 they.
 But death is the worst that comes of thee;
 Thou art fed with our dead, O mother, O
 sea,
 But when hast thou fed on our hearts? or
 when,
 Having given us love, hast thou taken
 away?

O tender-hearted, O perfect lover,
 Thy lips are bitter, and sweet thine heart.
 The hopes that hurt and the dreams that
 hover,

Shall they not vanish away and apart?
 But thou, thou art sure, thou art older than
 earth;
 Thou art strong for death and fruitful of
 birth;
 Thy depths conceal and thy gulfs discover;
 From the first thou wert; in the end thou
 art.

And grief shall endure not for ever, I know.
 As things that are not shall these things
 be;
 We shall live through seasons of sun and
 of snow,
 And none be grievous as this to me.
 We shall hear, as one in a trance that
 hears,
 The sound of time, the rhyme of the years;
 Wrecked hope and passionate pain will
 grow
 As tender things of a spring-tide sea

Sea-fruit that swings in the waves that hiss,
 Drowned gold and purple and royal
 rings.
 And all time past, was it all for this?
 Times unforgotten, and treasures of
 things?
 Swift years of liking, and sweet long laugh-
 ter,
 That wist not well of the year thereafter
 Till love woke, smitten at heart by a kiss,
 With lips that trembled and trailing
 wings?

There lived a singer in France of old,
 By the tideless dolorous midland sea.
 In a land of sand and ruin and gold
 There shone one woman, and none but
 she.
 And finding life for her love's sake fail,
 Being fain to see her, he bade set sail,
 Touched land, and saw her as life grew
 cold,
 And praised God, seeing; and so died he.

Died, praising God for his gift and grace:
 For she bowed down to him weeping,
 and said
 "Live;" and her tears were shed on his
 face
 Or ever the life in his face was shed.
 The sharp tears fell through her hair, and
 stung

Once, and her close lips touched him and
clung

Once, and grew one with his lips for a
space;

And so drew back, and the man was
dead.

O brother, the gods were good to you.

Sleep, and be glad while the world en-
dures.

Be well content as the years wear through;
Give thanks for life, and the loves and
lures;

Give thanks for life, O brother, and death,
For the sweet last sound of her feet, her
breath,

For gifts she gave you, gracious and few,
Tears and kisses, that lady of yours.

Rest and be glad of the gods; but I,

How shall I praise them, or how take
rest?

There is not room under all the sky
For me that know not of worst or best,
Dream or desire of the days before,
Sweet things or bitterness, any more.

Love will not come to me now though I
die,

As love came close to you, breast to
breast.

I shall never be friends again with roses;

I shall loathe sweet tunes, where a note
grown strong

Relents and recoils, and climbs and closes,
As a wave of the sea turned back by
song.

There are sounds where the soul's delight
takes fire,

Face to face with its own desire;

A delight that rebels, a desire that reposes,
I shall hate sweet music my whole life
long.

The pulse of war and passion of wonder,
The heavens that murmur, the sounds
that shine,

The stars that sing and the loves that
thunder,

The music burning at heart like wine,
An armed archangel whose hands raise up
All senses mixed up in the spirit's cup
Till flesh and spirit are molten in sunder—
These things are over, and no more mine.

These were a part of the playing I heard

Once, ere my love and my heart were at
strife;

Love that sings and hath wings as a bird,
Balm of the wound and heft of the knife,
Fairer than earth is the sea, and sleep
Than overwatching of eyes that weep,
Now time has done with his one sweet
word,

The wine and leaven of lovely life.

I shall go my ways, tread out my measure,
Fill the days of my daily breath

With fugitive things not good to treasure,
Do as the world doth, say as it saith;

But if we had loved each other—O sweet,
Had you felt, lying under the palms of
your feet,

The heart of my heart, beating harder with
pleasure

To feel you tread it to dust and death—

Ah, had I not taken my life up and given

All that life gives and the years let go,

The wine and honey, the balm and leaven,
The dreams reared high and the hopes
brought low?

Come life, come death, not a word be said;
Should I lose you living, and vex you dead?
I never shall tell you on earth; and in
heaven

If I cry to you then, will you hear or
know?

LES NOYADES.

WHATEVER a man of the sons of men
 Shall say to his heart of the lords above,
 They have shown man verily, once and
 again,
 Marvellous mercies and infinite love.

In the wild fifth year of the change of
 things,
 When France was glorious and blood-
 red, fair
 With dust of battle and deaths of kings,
 A queen of men, with helmeted hair;

Carrier came down to the Loire and slew,
 Till all the ways and the waves waxed
 red:

Bound and drowned, slaying two by two,
 Maidens and young men, naked and wed.
 They brought on a day to his judgment-
 place

One rough with labor and red with fight,
 And a lady noble by name and face,
 Faultless, a maiden, wonderful, white.

She knew not, being for shame's sake blind,
 If his eyes were hot on her face hard by.
 And the judge bade strip and ship them,
 and bind

Bosom to bosom to drown and die.

The white girl winced and whitened; but
 he

Caught fire, waxed bright as a great
 bright flame

Seen with thunder far out on the sea,
 Laughed hard as the glad blood went
 and came.

Twice his lips quailed with delight, then
 said,

"I have but a word to you all, one word
 Bear with me; surely I am but dead;"
 And all they laughed and mocked him
 and heard.

"Judge, when they open the judgment-
 roll,

I will stand upright before God and pray:
 'Lord God, have mercy on one man's soul,
 For his mercy was great upon earth, I
 say.

" 'Lord, if I loved thee—Lord, if I
 served—

If these who darkened thy Son's fair face
 I fought with, sparing not one, nor swerved
 A hand's-breadth, Lord, in the perilous
 place—

" 'I pray thee say to this man, O Lord,
Sit thou for him at my feet on a throne.
 I will face thy wrath, though it bite as a
 sword,

And my soul shall burn for his soul and
 atone.

" 'For Lord, thou knowest, O God most
 wise,
 How gracious on earth were his deeds
 toward me.

Shall this be a small thing in thine eyes,
 That is greater in mine than the whole
 great sea?"

"I have loved this woman my whole life
 long,

And even for love's sake when have I
 said

'I love you?' when have I done you
 wrong,

Living? but now I shall have you dead.

"Yea, now, do I bid you love me, love?
 Love me or loathe, we are one not twain.
 But God be praised in his heaven above
 For this my pleasure and that my pain!

"For never a man, being mean like me,
 Shall die like me till the whole world
 dies.

I shall drown with her, laughing for love ;
and she
Mix with me, touching me, lips and
eyes.

"Shall she not know me and see me all
through,
Me, on whose heart as a worm she trod?
You have given me, God requite it you,
What man yet never was given of God."

O sweet one love, O my life's delight,
Dear, though the days have divided us,
Lost beyond hope, taken far out of sight,
Not twice in the world shall the gods do
thus.

Had it been so hard for my love? but I,
Though the gods gave all that a god can
give,
I had chosen rather the gift to die,
Cease, and be glad above all that live.

For the Loire would have driven us down
to the sea,
And the sea would have pitched us from
shoal to shoal;
And I should have held you, and you held
me,
As flesh holds flesh, and the soul the
soul.

Could I change you, help you to love
me, sweet,
Could I give you the love that would
sweeten death,
We should yield, go down, locked hands
and feet,
Die, drown together, and breath catch
breath;

But you would have felt my soul in a kiss,
And known that once if I loved you well;
And I would have given my soul for this
To burn for ever in burning hell.

A LEAVE-TAKING.

LET us go hence, my songs; she will not
hear.
Let us go hence together without fear;
Keep silence now, for singing-time is over
And over all old things and all things dear.
She loves not you nor me as all we love her.
Yea, though we sang as angels in her ear,
She would not hear.

Let us rise up and part; she will not know.
Let us go seaward as the great winds go,
Full of blown sand and foam; what help is
there?

There is no help, for all these things are so,
And all the world is bitter as a tear.
And how these things are, though ye strove
to show,
She would not know.

Let us go home and hence; she will not
weep,
We gave love many dreams and days to
keep,
Flowers without scent, and fruits that would
not grow,
Saying, 'If thou wilt, thrust in thy sickle
and reap.'
All is reaped now; no grass is left to mow;
And we that sowed, though all we fell on
sleep,
She would not weep.

Let us go hence and rest; she will not love.
She shall not hear us if we sing hereof,
Nor see love's ways, how sore they are and
steep.
Come hence, let be, lie still; it is enough.

Love is a barren sea, bitter and deep;
And though she saw all heaven in flower
above,

She would not love.

Let us give up, go down; she will not care.
Though all the stars made gold of all the air,
And the sea moving saw before it move
One moon-flower making all the foam-
flowers fair;

Though all those waves went over us, and
drove

Deep down the stifling lips and drowning
hair

She would not care.

Let us go hence, go hence; she will not
see.

Sing all once more together; surely she,
She too, remembering days and words that
were,

Will turn a little toward us, sighing; but
we,

We are hence, we are gone, as though we
had not been there.

Nay, and though all men seeing had pity
on me,

She would not see.

ITYLUS.

SWALLOW, my sister, O sister swallow,
How can thine heart be full of the spring?
A thousand summers are over and
dead.

What hast thou found in the spring to follow?
What hast thou found in thine heart to
sing?

What wilt thou do when the summer is
shed?

O swallow, sister, O fair swift swallow,
Why wilt thou fly after spring to the
south,

The soft south whither thine heart is
set?

Shall not the grief of the old time follow?
Shall not the song thereof cleave to thy
mouth?

Hast thou forgotten ere I forget?

Sister, my sister, O fleet sweet swallow,
Thy way is long to the sun and the south;

But I, fulfilled of my heart's desire,
Shedding my song upon height, upon
hollow,

From tawny body and sweet small mouth
Feed the heart of the night with fire.

I the nightingale all spring through,
O swallow, sister, O changing swallow,
All spring through till the spring be done,
Clothed with the light of the night on the
dew,

Sing, while the hours and the wild birds
follow,

Take flight and follow and find the
sun,

Sister, my sister, O soft light swallow,
Though all things feast in the spring's
guest-chamber,
How hast thou heart to be glad there
of yet?

For where thou fliest I shall not follow,
Till life forget and death remember,
Till thou remember and I forget.

Swallow, my sister, O singing swallow,
I know not how thou hast heart to sing.
Hast thou the heart? is it all past over?

Thy lord the summer is good to follow,
And fair the feet of thy lover the spring :
But what wilt thou say to the spring
thy lover ?

O swallow, sister, O fleeting swallow,
My heart in me is a molten ember
And over my head the waves have met.
But thou wouldst tarry or I would follow,
Could I forget or thou remember,
Couldst thou remember and I forget.

O sweet stray sister, O shifting swallow
The heart's division divideth us.
Thy heart is light as a leaf of a tree;
But mine goes forth among sea-gulfs hollow
To the place of the slaying of Itylus,
The feast of Daulis, the Thracian sea.

O swallow, sister, O rapid swallow,
I pray thee sing not a little space.
Are not the roofs and the lintels wet ?
The woven web that was plain to follow,
The small slain body, the flower-like
face,
Can I remember if thou forget ?

O sister, sister, thy first-begotten !
The hands that cling and the feet that
follow,
The voice of the child's blood crying
yet
*Who hath remembered me? who hath for-
gotten?*
Thou hast forgotten, O summer swallow,
But the world shall end when I forget

ANACTORIA.

τινὸς αὖ τὸ πειθοῖ
μάψ σαγηνεύσας φιλότατα ;
SARPHO.

My life is bitter with thy love; thine eyes
Blind me, thy tresses burn me, thy sharp
sighs
Divide my flesh and spirit with soft sound,
And my blood strengthens, and my veins
abound.
I pray thee sigh not, speak not, draw not
breath;
Let life burn down, and dream it is not
death.
I would the sea had hidden us, the fire
(Wilt thou fear that, and fear not my de-
sire?)
Severed the bones that bleach, the flesh
that cleaves,
And let our sifted ashes drop like leaves.

I feel thy blood against my blood: my pain
Pains thee, and lips bruise lips, and vein
stings vein.
Let fruit be crushed on fruit, let flower on
flower,
Breast kindle breast, and either burn one
hour.
Why wilt thou follow lesser loves? are
thine
Too weak to bear these hands and lips of
mine?
I charge thee for my life's sake, O too sweet
To crush love with thy cruel faultless feet,
I charge thee keep thy lips from hers or his,
Sweetest, till theirs be sweeter than my
kiss.

Lest I too lure, a swallow for a dove,
 Erotion or Erinna to my love.
 I would my love could kill thee; I am
 satiated
 With seeing thee live, and fain would have
 thee dead.
 I would earth had thy body as fruit to eat,
 And no mouth but some serpent's found
 thee sweet.
 I would find grievous ways to have thee
 slain,
 Intense device, and superflux of pain;
 Vex thee with amorous agonies, and shake
 Life at thy lips, and leave it there to ache;
 Strain out thy soul with pangs too soft to
 kill,
 Intolerable interludes, and infinite ill;
 Relapse and reluctance of the breath,
 Dumb tunes and shuddering semitones of
 death.
 I am weary of all thy words and soft
 strange ways.
 Of all love's fiery nights and all his days,
 And all the broken kisses salt as brine
 That shuddering lips make moist with
 waterish wine,
 And eyes the bluer for all those hidden
 hours
 That pleasure fills with tears and feeds
 from flowers,
 Fierce at the heart with fire that half comes
 through,
 But all the flower-like white-stained round
 with blue;
 The fervent underlid, and that above
 Lifted with laughter or abashed with love;
 Thine amorous girdle, full of thee and fair,
 And leavings of the lilies in thine hair.
 Yea, all sweet words of thine and all thy
 ways,
 And all the fruit of nights and flower of
 days,
 And stinging lips wherein the hot sweet
 brine
 That love was born of burns and foams
 like wine,
 And eyes insatiable of amorous hours,
 Fervent as fire and delicate as flowers,
 Colored like night at heart, but cloven
 through
 Like night with flame, dyed round like
 night with blue,
 Clothed with deep eyelids under and
 above—
 Yea, all thy beauty sickens me with love;

Thy girdle empty of thee and now not fair,
 And ruinous lilies in thy languid hair.
 Ah, take no thought for Love's sake; shall
 this be,
 And she who loves thy lover not love thee?
 Sweet soul, sweet mouth of all that laughs
 and lives,
 Mine is she, very mine; and she forgives.
 For I beheld in sleep the light that is
 In her high place in Paphos, heard the kiss
 Of body and soul that mix with eager tears
 And laughter stinging through the eyes and
 ears;
 Saw Love, as burning flame from crown to
 feet,
 Imperishable, upon her storied seat;
 Clear eyelids lifted toward the north and
 south,
 A mind of many colors and a mouth
 Of many tunes and kisses; and she bowed,
 With all her subtle face laughing aloud,
 Bowed down upon me, saying, "Who
 doth the wrong,
 Sappho?" but thou—thy body is the song,
 Thy mouth the music; thou art more than I.
 Though my voice die not till the whole
 world die;
 Though men that hear it madden; though
 love weep,
 Though nature change, though shame be
 charmed to sleep.
 Ah, wilt thou slay me lest I kiss thee dead?
 Yet the queen laughed from her sweet heart
 and said:
 "Even she that flies shall follow for thy
 sake,
 And she shall give thee gifts that would not
 take,
 Shall kiss that would not kiss thee" (yea,
 kiss me)
 "When thou wouldst not"—when I would
 not kiss thee!
 Ah, more to me than all men as thou art,
 Shall not my songs assuage her at the
 heart?
 Ah, sweet to me as life seems sweet to
 death,
 Why should her wrath fill thee with fear-
 ful breath?
 Nay, sweet, for is she God alone? hath she
 Made earth and all the centuries of the sea,
 Taught the sun ways to travel, woven most
 fine
 The moonbeams, shed the starbeams forth
 as wine,

Bound with her myrtles, beaten with her
rods,
The young men and the maidens and the
gods?
Have we not lips to love with, eyes for
tears,
And summer and flower of women and of
years?
Stars for the foot of morning, and for noon
Sunlight, and exaltation of the moon;
Waters that answer waters, fields that wear
Lilies, and languor of the Lesbian air?
Beyond those flying feet of fluttered doves,
Are there not other gods for other loves?
Yea, though she scourge thee, sweetest,
for my sake,
Blossom not thorns, and flowers not blood
should break.
Ah that my lips were tuneless lips, but
pressed
To the bruised blossom of thy scourged
white breast!
Ah that my mouth for Muses' milk were
fed
On the sweet blood thy sweet small wounds
had bled!
That with my tongue I felt them, and could
taste
The faint flakes from thy bosom to the
waist!
That I could drink thy veins as wine, and
eat
Thy breasts like honey! that from face to
feet
Thy body were abolished and consumed,
And in my flesh thy very flesh entombed!
Ah, ah, thy beauty! like a beast it bites,
Stings like an adder, like an arrow smites.
Ah sweet, and sweet again, and seven times
sweet,
The paces and the pauses of thy feet!
Ah sweeter than all sleep or summer air
The fallen fillets fragrant from thine hair!
Yea, though their alien kisses do me wrong,
Sweeter thy lips than mine with all their
song;
Thy shoulders whiter than a fleece of white,
And flower-sweet fingers good to bruise or
bite
As honeycomb of the inmost honey-cells,
With almond-shaped and rose-leaf colored
shells,
And blood like purple blossom at the tips
Quivering; and pain made perfect in thy
lips

For my sake when I hurt thee; O that I
Durst crush thee out of life with love, and
die,
Die of thy pain and my delight, and be
Mixed with thy blood and molten into thee!
Would I not plague thee dying overmuch?
Would I not hurt thee perfectly? not touch
Thy pores of sense with torture, and make
bright
Thine eyes with bloodlike tears and grievous
light
Strike pang from pang as note is struck
from note,
Catch the sob's middle music in thy throat.
Take thy limbs living, and new-mould with
these
A lyre of many faultless agonies?
Feed thee with fever and famine and fine
drouth,
With perfect pangs convulse thy perfect
mouth,
Make thy life shudder in thee and burn
afresh,
And wring thy very spirit through the
flesh?
Cruel? but love makes all that love him
well
As wise as heaven and crueller than hell.
Me hath love made more bitter toward
thee
Than death toward man; but were I made
as he
Who hath made all things to break them
one by one,
If my feet trod upon the stars and sun
And souls of men as his have alway trod,
God knows I might be crueller than God.
For who shall change with prayers or
thanksgivings
The mystery of the cruelty of things?
Or say what God above all gods and years,
With offering and blood-sacrifice of tears,
With lamentation from strange lands, from
graves
Where the snake pastures, from scarred
mouths of slaves,
From prison, and from plunging prows of
ships
Through flame like foam of the sea's closing
lips—
With thwartings of strange signs, and
wind-blown hair
Of comets, desolating the dim air,
When darkness is made fast with seals and
bars,

And fierce reluctance of disastrous stars,
Eclipse, and sound of shaken hills, and wings

Darkening, and blind inexpiable things—
With sorrow of laboring moons, and altering light

And travail of the planets of the night,
And weeping of the weary Pleiads seven,
Feeds the mute melancholy lust of heaven?

Is not this incense bitterness, his meat
Murder? his hidden face and iron feet
Hath not man known, and felt them on
their way

Threaten and trample all things and every
day?

Hath he not sent us hunger? who hath
cursed

Spirit and flesh with longing? filled with
thirst

Their lips who cried unto him? who bade
exceed

The fervid will, fall short the feeble deed,
Bade sink the spirit and the flesh aspire,
Pain animate the dust of dead desire,

And life yield up her flower to violent fate?
Him would I reach, him smite, him desecrate,

Pierce the cold lips of God with human
breath,

And mix his immortality with death.

Why hath he made us? what had all we
done

That we should live and loathe the sterile
sun,

And with the moon wax pale as she wanes,
And pulse by pulse feel time grow through
our veins?

Thee too the years shall cover; thou shalt
be

As the rose born of one same blood with
thee,

As a song sung, as a word said, and fall
Flower-wise, and be not any more at all,
Nor any memory of thee anywhere;

For never Muse has bound above thine hair
The high Pierian flower whose graft out-
grows

All summer kinship of the mortal rose
And colour of deciduous days, nor shed
Reflex and flush of heaven about thine
head,

Nor reddened brows made pale by floral
grief

With splendid shadow from that lordlier
leaf.

Yea, thou shalt be forgotten like spilt wine,
Except these kisses of my lips on thine
Brand them with immortality; but me—

Men shall not see bright fire nor hear the
sea,

Nor mix their hearts with music, nor be-
hold

Cast forth of heaven with feet of awful
gold

And plumeless wings that make the bright
air blind,

Lightning with thunder for a hound behind
Hunting through fields unfurrowed and un-
sown—

But in the light and laughter, in the moan
And music, and in grasp of lip and hand

And shudder of water that makes felt on
land

The immeasurable tremor of all the sea,
Memories shall mix and metaphors of me.

Like me shall be the shuddering calm of
night,

When all the winds of the world for pure
delight

Close lips that quiver and fold up wings
that ache;

When nightingales are louder for love's
sake,

And leaves tremble like lute-strings or like
fire;

Like me the one star swooning with desire
Even at the cold lips of the sleepless moon,

As I at thine; like me the waste white
noon,

Burnt through with barren sunlight; and
like me

The land-stream and the tide-stream in the
sea.

I am sick with time as these with ebb and
flow,

And by the yearning in my veins I know
The yearning sound of waters; and mine
eyes

Burn as that beamless fire which fills the
skies

With troubled stars and travailing things of
flame;

And in my heart the grief consuming them
Labors, and in my veins the thirst of these,

And all the summer travail of the trees
And all the winter sickness; and the earth

Filled full with deadly works of death and
birth,

Sore spent with hungry lusts of birth and
death,

Has pain like mine in her divided breath ;
Her spring of leaves is barren, and her
fruit

Ashes ; her boughs are burdened, and her
root

Fibrous and gnarled with poison; under-
neath

Serpents have gnawn it through with tortu-
ous teeth

Made sharp upon the bones of all the dead,
And wild birds rend her branches over-
head.

These, woven as raiment for his word and
thought,

These hath God made, and me as these,
and wrought

Song, and hath lit it at my lips; and me
Earth shall not gather though she feed on
thee.

As a shed tear shalt thou be shed; but I—
Lo, earth may labor, men live long and
die,

Years change and stars, and the high God
devise

New things, and old things wane before his
eyes

Who wilds and wrecks them, being more
strong than they—

But, having made me, me he shall not slay.
Nor slay nor satiate, like those herds of his
Who laugh and live a little, and their kiss
Content, them, and their loves are swift
and sweet,

And sure death grasps and gains them with
slow feet,

Love they or hate they, strive or bow their
knees—

And all these end; he hath his will of these.
Yea, but albeit he slay me, hating me—

Albeit he hide me in the deep dear sea
And cover me with cool wan foam, and
ease

This soul of mine as any soul of these,
And give me water and great sweet waves,
and make

The very sea's name lordlier for my sake,
The whole sea sweeter—albeit I die indeed
And hide myself and sleep and no man
heed,

Ot me the high God hath not all his will.
Blossom of branches, and on each high hill
Clear air and wind, and under in clamorous
vales

Fierce noises of the fiery nightingales,
Buds burning in the sudden spring like fire,

The wan washed sand and the waves' vain
desire,

Sails seen like blown white flowers at sea,
and words

That bring tears swiftest, and long notes of
birds

Violently singing till the whole world
sings—

I Sappho shall be one with all these things,
With all high things for ever; and my face
Seen once, my songs once heard in a strange
place,

Cleave to men's lives, and waste the days
thereof

With gladness and much sadness and long
love.

Yea, they shall say, earth's womb has borne
in vain

New things, and never this best thing again;
Borne days and men, borne fruits and wars
and wine,

Seasons and songs, but no song more like
mine.

And they shall know me as ye who have
known me here,

Last year when I loved Atthis, and this
year

When I love thee; and they shall praise
me, and say

"She hath all time as all we have our day,
Shall she not live and have her will"—
even I?

Yea, though thou diest, I say I shall not
die.

For these shall give me of their souls, shall
give

Life, and the days and loves wherewith I
live,

Shall quicken me with loving, fill with
breath,

Save me and serve me, strive for me with
death

Alas, that neither moon nor snow nor
dew

Nor all cold things can purge me wholly
through,

Assuage me nor allay me nor appease,
Till supreme sleep shall bring me bloodless
ease;

Till time wax faint in all his periods;
Till fate undo the bondage of the gods,

And lay, to slake and satiate me all through,
Lotus and Lethe on my lips like dew,

And shed around and over and under me
Thick darkness and the insuperable sea.

HYMN TO PROSERPINE.

(AFTER THE PROCLAMATION IN ROME OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.)

Vicisti, Galilee.

<p>I HAVE lived long enough, having seen one thing, that love hath an end ; Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me now and befriend. Thou art more than the day or the morrow, the seasons that laugh or that weep ; For these give joy and sorrow ; but thou, Proserpina, sleep. Sweet is the treading of wine, and sweet the feet of the dove ; But a goodlier gift is thine than foam of the grapes or love. Yea, is not even Apollo, with hair and harpstring of gold, A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God to behold ? I am sick of singing ; the bays burn deep and chafe : I am fain To rest a little from praise and grievous pleasure and pain. For the Gods we know not of, who give us our daily breath, We know they are cruel as love or life, and lovely as death. O Gods dethroned and deceased, cast forth, wiped out in a day ! From your wrath is the world released, redeemed from your chains, men say. New Gods are crowned in the city, their flowers have broken your rods ; They are merciful, clothed with pity, the young compassionate Gods. But for me their new device is barren, the days are bare ; Things long past over suffice, and men forgotten that were. Time and the Gods are at strife: ye dwell in the midst thereof, Draining a little life from the barren breasts of love. I say to you, cease, take rest ; yea, I say to you all, be at peace,</p>	<p>Till the bitter milk of her breast and the barren bosom shall cease. Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean ? but these thou shalt not take, The laurel, the palms and the pæan, the breast of the nymphs in the brake ; Breasts more soft than a dove's, that tremble with tenderer breath; And all the wings of the Loves, and all the joy before death; All the feet of the hours that sound as a single lyre, Dropped and deep in the flowers, with strings that flicker like fire. More than these wilt thou give, things fairer than all these things ? Nay, for a little we live, and life hath mutable wings. A little while and we die; shall life not thrive as it may ? For no man under the sky lives twice, outliving his day. And grief is a grievous thing, and a man hath enough of his tears: Why should he labour, and bring fresh grief to blacken his years ? Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has grown grey from thy breath; We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed on the fulness of death. Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet for a day; But love grows bitter with treason, and laurel outlives not May. Sleep, shall we sleep after all? for the world is not sweet in the end; For the old faiths loosen and fall, the new years ruin and rend. Fate is a sea without shore, and the soul is a rock that abides; But her ears are vexed with the roar and her face with the foam of the tides.</p>
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O lips that the live blood faints in, the
 leavings of racks and rods !
 O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of
 gibbeted Gods !
 Though all men abase them before you in
 spirit, and all knees bend,
 I kneel not neither adore you, but stand-
 ing, look to the end.
 All delicate days and pleasant, all spirits
 and sorrows are cast
 Far out with the foam of the present that
 sweeps to the surf of the past:
 Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and
 between the remote sea-gates,
 Waste water washes, and tall ships founder,
 and deep death waits:
 Where, mighty with deepening sides, clad
 about with the seas as with wings,
 And impelled of invisible tides, and ful-
 filled of unspeakable things,
 White-eyed and poisonous finned, shark-
 toothed and serpentine-curved,
 Rolls, under the whitening wind of the
 future, the wave of the world.
 The depths stand naked in sunder behind
 it, the storms flee away;
 In the hollow before it the thunder is taken
 and snared as a prey;
 In its sides is the north-wind bound; and
 its salt is of all men's tears;
 With light of ruin, and sound of changes,
 and pulse of years:
 With travail of day after day, and with
 trouble of hour upon hour;
 And bitter as blood is the spray; and the
 crests are as fangs that devour:
 And its vapor and storm of its steam as the
 sighing of spirits to be;
 And its noise as the noise in a dream; and
 its depth as the roots of the sea:
 And the height of its heads as the height of
 the utmost stars of the air:
 And the ends of the earth at the might
 thereof tremble, and time is made bare.
 Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins, will
 ye chasten the high sea with rods?
 Will ye take her to chain her with chains,
 who is older than all ye Gods?
 All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire shall
 ye pass and be past;
 Ye are Gods, and behold ye shall die, and
 the waves be upon you at last.
 In the darkness of time, in the deeps of the
 years, in the changes of things,
 Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and
 the world shall forget you for kings.

Though the feet of thine high priests tread
 wherethy lords and our forefathers trod,
 Though these that were Gods are dead, and
 thou being dead art a God,
 Though before thee the throned Cytherian
 be fallen, and hidden her head,
 Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy
 dead shall go down to thee dead.
 Of the maiden thy mother, men sing as a
 goddess with grace clad around;
 Thou art throned where another was king;
 where another was queen she is crowned.
 Ye, once we had sight of another: but now
 she is queen, say these.
 Not as thine, not as thine was our mother,
 a blossom of flowering seas,
 Clothed round with the world's desire as
 with raiment, and fair as the foam,
 And fleetier than kindled fire, and a goddess,
 and mother of Rome.
 For thine came pale and a maiden, and
 sister to sorrow; but ours,
 Her deep hair heavily laden with odour and
 color of flowers,
 White rose of the rose-white water, a silver
 splendor, a flame,
 Bent down unto us that besought her, and
 earth grew sweet with her name.
 For thine came weeping, a slave among
 slaves, and rejected; but she
 Came flushed from the full-flushed wave,
 and imperial, her foot on the sea,
 And the wonderful waters knew her, the
 winds and the viewless ways,
 And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the
 sea-blue stream of the bays.
 Ye are fallen, our lords by what token? we
 wist that ye should not fall.
 Ye were all so fair that are broken; and
 one more fair than ye all.
 But I turn to her still, having seen she
 shall surely abide in the end;
 Goddess and maiden and queen, be near
 me now and befriend.
 O daughter of earth, of my mother, her
 crown and blossom of birth,
 I am also, I also, thy brother; I go as I
 came unto earth.
 In the night where thine eyes are as moon
 are in heaven, the night where thou art.
 Where the silence is more than all tunes,
 where sleep overflows from the heart,
 Where the poppies are sweet as the rose in
 our world, and the red rose is white,
 And the wind falls faint as it blows with
 the fume of the flowers of the night,

And the murmur of spirits that sleep in the
 shadow of Gods from afar
 Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the
 deep dim soul of a star,
 In the sweet low light of thy face, under
 heavens untrod by the sun,
 Let my soul with their souls find place, and
 forget what is done and undone.
 Thou art more than the Gods who number
 the days of our temporal breath;
 For these give labor and slumber; but thou,
 Proserpina, death.

Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a
 season in silence. I know
 I shall die as my fathers died, and sleep as
 they sleep; even so.
 For the glass of the years is brittle wherein
 we gaze for a span;
 A little soul for a little bears up this corpse
 which is man.*
 So long I endure, no longer; and laugh not
 again, neither weep.
 For there is no God found stronger than
 death; and death is a sleep.

ILICET.

THERE is an end of joy and sorrow;
 Peace all day long, all night, all morrow,
 But never a time to laugh or weep.
 The end is come of pleasant places,
 The end of tender words and faces,
 The end of all, the popped sleep.

No place for sound within their hearing,
 No room to hope, no time for fearing,
 No lips to laugh, no lids for tears.
 The old years have run out all their measure;
 No chance of pain, no chance of pleasure,
 No fragment of the broken years.

Outside of all the worlds and ages,
 There where the fool is as the sage is,
 There where the slayer is clean of blood,
 No end, no passage, no beginning,
 There where the sinner leaves off sinning,
 There where the good man is not good.

There is not one thing with another,
 But Evil saith to Good: My brother,
 My brother, I am one with thee:
 They shall not strive nor cry forever:
 No man shall chose between them: never
 Shall this thing end and that thing be.

Wind wherein seas and stars are shaken
 Shall shake them, and they shall not waken;

None that has lain down shall arise;
 The stones are sealed across their places;
 One shadow is shed on all their faces,
 One blindness cast on all their eyes.

Sleep, is it sleep perchance that covers
 Each face, as each face were his lover's?
 Farewell; as men that sleep fare well.
 The grave's mouth laughs unto derision
 Desire and dread and dream and vision,
 Delight of heaven and sorrow of hell.

No soul shall tell nor lip shall number
 The names and tribes of you that slumber;
 No memory, no memorial.
 Thou knowest"—who shall say thou
 knowest?

There is none highest and none lowest:
 An end, an end, an end of all.

Good night, good sleep, good rest from
 sorrow,

To these that shall not have good morrow;
 The gods be gentle to all these.

Nay, if death be not, how shall they be?
 Nay, is there help in heaven? it may be
 All things and lords of things shall cease.

**ψυχάριον εἰ βαστάζον νεκρόν.*

The stooped urn, filling, dips and flashes;
 The bronzed brims are deep in ashes;
 The pale old lips of death are fed.
 Shall this dust gather flesh hereafter?
 Shall one shed tears or fall to laughter,
 At sight of all these poor old dead?

Nay, as thou wilt; these know not of it;
 Thine eyes' strong weeping shall not profit,
 Thy laughter shall not give thee ease;
 Cry aloud, spare not, cease not crying,
 Sigh, till thou cleave thy sides with sighing,
 Thou shalt not raise up one of these.

Burnt spices flash, and burnt wine hisses,
 The breathing flame's mouth curls and kisses

The small dried rows of frankincense;
 All round the sad red blossoms smoulder,
 Flowers colored like the fire, but colder,
 In sign of sweet things taken hence;

Yea, for their sake and in death's favor
 Things of sweet shape and of sweet savor
 We yield them, spice and flower and wine;
 Yea, costlier things than wine or spices,
 Whereof none knoweth how great the price
 is,
 And fruit that comes not of the vine.

From boy's pierced throat and girl's pierced
 bosom
 Drips, reddening round the blood-red
 blossoms,
 The slow delicious bright soft blood,
 Bathing the spices and the pyre,
 Bathing the flowers and fallen fire,
 Bathing the blossom by the bud.

Roses whose lips the flame had deadened
 Drink till the lapping leaves are reddened
 And warm wet inner petals weep;
 The flower whereof sick sleep gets leisure,
 Barren of balm and purple pleasure,
 Fumes with no native steam of sleep.

Why will ye weep? what do ye weeping?
 For walking folk and people sleeping,
 And sands that fill and sands that fall,
 The days rose-red, the poppied hours,
 Blood, wine, and spice and fire and flowers,
 There is one end of one and all.

Shall such an one lend love or borrow?
 Shall these be sorry for thy sorrow?

Shall these give thanks for words or
 breath?

Their hate is as their loving-kindness;
 The frontlet of their brows is blindness,
 The armlet of their arms is death.

Lo, for no noise or light of thunder
 Shall these grave-clothes be rent in sunder,
 He that hath taken, shall he give?
 He hath rent them: shall he bind to-
 gether?
 He hath bound them: shall he break the
 tether?
 He hath slain them: shall he bid them live?

A little sorrow, a little pleasure,
 Fate mates us from the dusty measure
 That holds the date of all of us;
 We are born with travail and strong crying,
 And from the birth-day to the dying
 The likeness of our life is thus.

One girds himself to serve another,
 Whose father was the dust, whose mother
 The little dead red worm therein;
 They find no fruit of things they cherish;
 The goodness of a man shall perish,
 It shall be one thing with his sin.

In deep wet ways by grey old gardens
 Fed with sharp spring the sweet fruit har-
 dens;
 They know not what fruits wane or grow;
 Red summer burns to the utmost ember;
 They know not, neither can remember,
 The old years and flowers they used to
 know.

Ah, for their sakes, so trapped and taken,
 For theirs, forgotten and forsaken,
 Watch, sleep not, gird thyself with prayer.
 Nay, where the heart of wrath is broken,
 Where long love ends as a thing spoken,
 How shall thy crying enter there?

Though the iron sides of the old world falter
 The likeness of them shall not alter
 For all the rumor of periods,
 The stars and seasons that come after
 The tears of latter men, the laughter
 Of the old unalterable gods.

Far up above the years and nations,
 The high gods, clothed and crowned with
 patience,

Endure through days of death-like date;
 They bear the witness of things hidden;
 Before their eyes all life stands chidden,
 As they before the eyes of Fate.

Not for their love shall Fate retire,
 Nor they relent for our desire,

Nor the graves open for their call.
 The end is more than joy and anguish,
 Than lives that laugh and lives that languish,
 The popped sleep, the end of all!

HERMAPHRODITUS.

I.

LIFT up thy lips, turn round, look back for
 love,
 Blind love that comes by night and casts
 out rest;
 Or all things tired thy lips look weariest,
 Save the long smile that they are wearied
 of.
 Ah sweet, albeit no love be sweet enough,
 Choose of two loves and cleave unto the
 best;
 Two loves at either blossom of thy breast
 Strive until one be under and one above.
 Their breath is fire upon the amorous air,
 Fire in thine eyes and where thy lips sus-
 pire:
 And whosoever hath seen thee, being so
 fair,
 Two things turn all his life and blood to
 fire;
 A strong desire begot on great despair,
 A great despair cast out by strong desire.

II.

Where between sleep and life some brief
 space is,
 With love like gold bound round about
 the head,
 Sex to sweet sex with lips and limbs is
 wed,
 Turning the fruitful feud of hers and his

To the waste wedlock of a sterile kiss;
 Yet from them something like as fire is
 shed
 That shall not be assuaged till death be
 dead,
 Though neither life nor sleep can find out
 this.
 Love made himself of flesh that perisheth
 A pleasure-house for all the loves his kin;
 But on the one side sat a man like death,
 And on the other a woman sat like sin.
 So with veiled eyes and sobs between his
 breath
 Love turned himself and would not enter
 in.

III.

Love, is it love or sleep or shadow or light
 That lies between thine eyelids and thine
 eyes?
 Like a flower laid upon a flower it lies,
 Or like the night's dew laid upon the night.
 Love stands upon thy left hand and thy
 right,
 Yet by no sunset and by no moonrise
 Shall make thee man and ease a woman's
 sighs,
 Or make thee woman for a man's delight.
 To what strange end hath some strange
 god made fair
 The double blossom of two fruitless
 flowers?
 Hid love in all the folds of all thy hair,

Fed thee on summers, watered thee with
showers,
Given all the gold that all the seasons wear
To thee that art a thing of barren hours?

IV.

Yea, love, I see; it is not love but fear.
Nay, sweet, it is not fear but love, I
know;
Or wherefore should thy body's blossom
blow
So sweetly, or thine eyelids leave so clear
Thy gracious eyes that never made a tear—
Though for their love our tears like blood
should flow,

Though love and life and death should
come and go,
So dreadful, so desirable, so dear?
Yea, sweet, I know; I saw in what swift
wise
Beneath the woman's and the water's
kiss
Thy moist limbs melted into Salmacis,
And the large light turned tender in thine
eyes,
And all thy boy's breath softened into
sighs;
But Love being blind, how should he
know of this?

Au Musée du Louvre, Mars 1863.

FRAGOLETTA.

O LOVE! what shall be said of thee?
The son of grief begot by joy?
Being sightless, wilt thou see?
Being sexless, wilt thou be
Maiden or boy?

I dreamed of strange lips yesterday
And cheeks wherein the ambiguous blood
Was like a rose's—yea
A rose's when it lay
Within the bud.

What fields have bred thee, or what groves
Concealed thee, O mysterious flower,
O double rose of Love's,
With leaves that lure the doves
From bud to bower?

I dare not kiss it, lest my lip
Press harder than an indrawn breath,
And all the sweet life slip
Forth, and the sweet leaves drip,
Bloodlike, in death.

O sole desire of my delight!
O sole delight of my desire!
Mine eyelids and eyesight
Feed on thee day and night
Like lips of fire.

Lean back thy throat of carven pearl,
Let thy mouth murmur like the dove's;
Say, Venus hath no girl,
No front of female curl,
Among her Loves.

Thy sweet low bosom, thy close hair,
Thy strait soft flanks and slenderer feet,
Thy virginal strange air,
Are these not over fair
For Love to greet?

How should he greet thee? what new name,
Fit to move all men's hearts, could move
Thee, deaf to love or shame,
Love's sister, by the same
Mother as Love?

Ah, sweet, the maiden's mouth is cold,
 Her breast-blossoms are simply red,
 Her hair mere brown or gold,
 Fold over simple fold
 Binding her head.

Thy mouth is made of fire and wine,
 Thy barren bosom takes my kiss
 And turns my soul to thine
 And turns thy lip to mine,
 And mine it is.

Thou hast a serpent in thine hair,
 In all the curls that close and cling;
 And ah, thy breast-flower!
 Ah love, thy mouth too fair
 To kiss and sting.

Cleave to me, love me, kiss mine eyes
 Sate thy lips with loving me;
 Nay, for thou shalt not rise;
 Lie still as Love that dies
 For love of thee.

Mine arms are close about thine head,
 My lips are fervent on thy face,
 And where my kiss hath fed
 Thy flower-like blood leaps red
 To the kissed place.

O bitterness of things too sweet
 O broken singing of the dove!
 Love's wings are over fleet,
 And like the panther's feet
 The feet of Love.

RONDEL.

THESE many years since we began to
 be,

What have the gods done with us? what
 with me,

What with my love? they have shown me
 fates and fears,

Harsh springs, and fountains bitterer than
 the sea,

Grief a fixed star, and joy a vane that
 veers,

These many years.

With her, my love, with her have they
 done well?

But who shall answer for her? who shall
 tell

Sweet things or sad, such things as no man
 hears?

May no tears fall, if no tears ever fell,
 From eyes more dear to me than starriest
 spheres

These many years!

But if tears ever touched, for any grief,
 Those eyelids folded like a white-rose leaf,
 Deep double shells where through the eye-
 flower peers,

Let them weep once more only, sweet and
 brief,

Brief tears and bright, for one who gave
 her tears

These many years.

SATIA TE SANGUINE.

If you loved me ever so little,
 I could bear the bonds that gall,
 I could dream the bonds were brittle;
 You do not love me at all.

O beautiful lips, O bosom
 More white than the moon's and warm,
 A sterile, a ruinous blossom
 Is blown your way in a storm.

As the lost white feverish limbs
Of the Lesbian Sappho, adrift
In foam where the sea-weed swims,
Swam loose for the streams to lift.

My heart swims blind in a sea
That stuns me ; swims to and fro,
And gathers to windward and lee
Lamentation, and mourning, and woe.

A broken, an emptied boat,
Sea saps it, winds blow apart,
Sick and adrift and afloat,
The barren waif of a heart.

Where, when the gods would be cruel,
Do they go for a torture? where
Plant thorns, set pain like a jewel?
Ah, not in the flesh, not there!

The racks of earth and the rods
Are weak as foam on the sand-;
In the heart is the prey for gods,
Who crucify hearts, not hands.

Mere pangs corrode and consume,
Dead when life dies in the brain;
In the infinite spirit is room
For the pulse of an infinite pain.

I wish you were dead, my dear;
I would give you, had I to give,
Some death too bitter to fear;
It is better to die than live.

I wish you were stricken of thunder
And burnt with a bright flame through,
Consumed and cloven in sunder,
I dead at your feet like you.

If I could but know after all,
I might cease to hunger and ache,
Though your heart were ever so small
If it were not a stone or a snake.

You are crueller, you that we love,
Than hatred, hunger, or death;
You have eyes and breasts like a dove
And you kill men's hearts with a breath.

As plague in a poisonous city
Insults and exults on her dead,
So you, when pallid for pity
Comes love, and fawns to be fed.

As a tame beast writhes and wheedles,
He fawns to be fed with wiles;
You carve him a cross of needles,
And whet them sharp as your smiles.

He is patient of thorn and whip,
He is dumb under axe or dart;
You suck with a sleepy red lip
The wet red wounds in his heart.

You thrill as his pulses dwindle,
You brighten and warm as he bleeds,
With insatiable eyes that kindle
And insatiable mouth that feeds.

Your hands nailed love to the tree,
You stript him, scourged him with rods,
And drowned him deep in the sea
That hides the dead and their gods.

And for all this, die will he not;
There is no man sees him but I;
You came and went and forgot;
I hope he will some day die.

A LITANY.

ἐν οὐρανῷ φαινώας
κρύψω παρ' ὑμῖν αἰγὰς,
μίας πρὸ νυκτὸς ἑπτὰ νύκτας ἔξετε. κ.τ.λ.

Anth. Sat.

FIRST ANTIPHONE.

ALL the bright lights of heaven
I will make dark over thee;

One night shall be as seven
That its skirts may cover thee;
I will send on thy strong men a sword,

On thy remnant a rod;
Ye shall know that I am the Lord.
Saith the Lord God.

SECOND ANTIPHONE.

All the bright lights of heaven
Thou hast made dark over us;
One night has been as seven
That its skirts might cover us;
Thou hast sent on our strong men a sword,
On our remnant a rod;
We know that thou art the Lord,
O Lord our God.

THIRD ANTIPHONE.

As the trees and wings of the wind
Are scattered and shaken,
I will scatter all them that have sinned,
There shall none be taken;
As a sower that scattered seed,
So will I scatter them;
As one breaketh and shattereth a reed,
I will break and shatter them.

FOURTH ANTIPHONE.

As the wings and the locks of the wind
Are scattered and shaken,
Thou hast scattered all them that have
sinned,
There was no man taken.
As a sower that scattereth seed,
So hast thou scattered us;
As one breaketh and shattereth a reed,
Thou hast broken and shattered us.

FIFTH ANTIPHONE.

From all thy lovers that love thee
I God will under thee;
I will make darkness above thee,
And thick darkness under thee;
Before me goeth a light,
Behind me a sword;
Shall a remnant find grace in my sight?
I am the Lord.

SIXTH ANTIPHONE.

From all our lovers that love us
Thou god didst sunder us;
Thou madest darkness above us,
And thick darkness under us;
Thou hast kindled thy wrath for a light,
And made ready thy sword;

Let a remnant find grace in thy sight,
We beseech thee, O Lord.

SEVENTH ANTIPHONE.

Wilt thou bring fine gold for a payment
For sins on this wise?
For the glittering of raiment
And the shining of eyes,
For the painting of faces
And the sundering of trust,
For the sins of thine high places
And delight of thy lust?

For your high things ye shall have lowly,
Lamentation for song;
For, behold, I God am holy,
I the Lord am strong;
Ye shall seek me and shall not reach me
Till the wine-press be trod;
In that hour ye shall turn and beseech me
Saith the Lord God.

EIGHTH ANTIPHONE.

Not with fine gold for a payment,
But with coin of sighs
But with rending of raiment
And with weeping of eyes,
But with shame of stricken faces
And with strewing of dust
For the sin of stately places
And lordship of lust;

With voices of men made lowly
Made empty of song,
O Lord God most holy,
O God most strong,
We reach out hands to reach thee
Ere the wine-press be trod;
We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee
O Lord our God.

NINTH ANTIPHONE.

In that hour thou shalt say to the night,
Come down and cover us;
To the cloud on thy left and thy right,
Be thou spread over us;
A snare shall be as thy mother,
And a curse thy bride;
Thou shalt put her away, and another
Shall lie by thy side.

Thou shalt neither rise up by day
Nor lie down by night.

Would God it were dark ! thou shalt say;
 Would God it were light !
 And the sight of thine eyes shall be made
 As the burning of fire ;
 And thy soul shall be sorely afraid
 For thy soul's desire.

Ye whom your lords loved well,
 Putting silver and gold on you,
 The inevitable hell
 Shall surely take hold on you ;
 Your gold shall be for a token,
 Your staff for a rod ;
 With the breaking of bands ye are broken,
 Saith the Lord God.

TENTH ANTIPHONE

In our sorrow we said to the night,
 Fall down and cover us ;
 To the darkness at left and at right,
 Be thou shed over us ;
 We had breaking of spirit to mother

And cursing to bride;
 And one was slain, and another
 Stood up at our side.

We could not arise by day,
 Nor lie down by night;
 Thy sword was sharp in our way,
 Thy word in our sight;
 The delight of our eyelids was made
 As the burning of fire,
 And our souls became sorely afraid
 For our soul's desire.

We whom the world loved well,
 Laying silver and gold on us,
 The kingdom of death and of hell
 Biseth up to take hold on us;
 Our gold is turned to a token,
 Our staff to a rod;
 Yet shalt thou bind them up that were
 broken
 O Lord our God.

A LAMENTATION.

I.

Who hath known the ways of time
 Or trodden behind his feet ?
 There is no such man among men.
 For chance overcomes him, or crime
 Changes; for all things sweet
 In time wax bitter again.
 Who shall give sorrow enough,
 Or who the abundance of tears ?
 Mine eyes are heavy with love
 And a sword gone through mine ears,
 A sound like a sword and fire,
 For pity, for great desire;
 Who shall ensure me thereof,
 Lest I die, being full of my fears ?

Who hath known the ways and the wrath
 The sleepless spirit, the root
 And blossom of evil will,

The divine device of a god ?
 Who shall behold it or hath ?
 The twice-tongued prophets are mute,
 The many speakers are still;
 No foot has travelled or trod,
 No hand has meted, his path.
 Man's fate is a blood-red fruit,
 And the mighty gods have their fill
 And relax not the rein, or the rod.

Ye were mighty in heart from of old,
 Ye slew with the spear, and are slain.
 Keen after heat is the cold,
 Sore after summer is rain,
 And melteth man to the bone.
 As water he weareth away,
 As a flower, as an hour in a day,
 Fallen from laughter to moan.
 But my spirit is shaken with fear
 Lest an evil thing begin,

New-born, a spear for a spear,
 And one for another sin,
 Or ever our tears began,
 It was known from of old and said;
 One law for a living man,
 And another law for the dead.
 For these are fearful and sad,
 Vain, and things without breath;
 While he lives let a man be glad,
 For none hath joy of his death.

II.

Who hath known the pain, the old pain of
 earth,
 Or all the travail of the sea,
 The many ways and waves, the birth
 Fruitless, the labor nothing worth?
 Who hath known, who knoweth, O gods?
 not we.

There is none shall say he hath seen,
 There is none he hath known.
 Though he saith, Lo, a lord have I been,
 I have reaped and sown;
 I have seen the desire of mine eyes,
 The beginning of love,
 The season of kisses and sighs
 And the end thereof
 I have known the ways of the sea,
 All the perilous ways;
 Strange winds have spoken with me,
 And the tongues of strange days.
 I have hewn the pine or ships;
 Where steeds run arow,
 I have seen from their bridled lips
 Foam blown as the snow,
 With snapping of chariot-poles
 And with straining of oars
 I have grazed in the race the goals,
 In the storm the shores;
 As a greave is cleft with an arrow
 At the joint of the knee,
 I have cleft through the sea-straits narrow
 To the heart of the sea.
 When air was smitten in sunder
 I have watched on high
 The ways of the stars and the thunder
 In the night of the sky;
 Where the dark brings forth light as a
 flower,
 As from lips that disserve;
 One abideth the space of an hour,
 One endureth for ever.
 Lo, what hath he seen or known

Of the way and the wave
 Unbeholden, unsailed-on, unsown,
 From the breast to the grave?

Or ever the stars were made, or skies,
 Grief was born, and the kinless night,
 Mother of gods without form or name.
 And light is born out of heaven and dies,
 And one day knows not another's light,
 But night is one, and her shape the
 same.

But dumb the goddesses underground
 Wait, and we hear not on earth if their
 feet

Rise, and the night wax loud with
 their wings;
 Dumb, without word or shadow of sound;
 And sift in scales and winnow as wheat
 Men's souls, and sorrow of manifold
 things.

III

Nor less of grief than ours
 The gods wrought long ago
 To bruise men one by one;
 But with the incessant hours
 Fresh grief and greener woe
 Spring, as the sudden sun
 Year after year makes flowers;
 And these die down and grow,
 And the next year lacks none.

As these men sleep, have slept
 The old heroes in time fled,
 No dream-divided sleep;
 And holier eyes have wept
 Than ours when on her dead
 Gods have seen Thetis weep,
 With heavenly hair far-swept
 Back, heavenly hands outspread
 Round what she could not keep.

Could not one day withhold,
 One night; and like as these
 White ashes of no weight,
 Held not his urn the cold
 Ashes of Heracles!
 For all things born one gate
 Opens, no gate of gold;
 Opens; and no man sees
 Beyond the gods and fate.

ANIMA ANCEPS

TILL death have broken
 Sweet life's love-token,
 Till all be spoken
 That shall be said,
 What dost thou praying,
 O soul, and playing
 With song and saying,
 Things flown and fled
 For this we know not—
 That fresh springs flow not
 And fresh grief grows not
 When men are dead;
 When strange years cover
 Lover and lover,
 And joys are over
 And tears are shed.

If one day's sorrow
 Mar the day's morrow—
 If man's life borrow
 And man's death pay—
 If souls once taken,
 If lives once shaken,
 Arise, awaken,
 By night, by day—

Why with strong crying
 And years of sighing,
 Living and dying,
 Fast ye and pray?
 For all your weeping,
 Waking and sleeping;
 Death comes to reaping
 And takes away.
 Though time rend after
 Roof-tree from rafter,
 A little laughter
 Is much more worth
 Than thus to measure
 The hour, the treasure,
 The pain, the pleasure,
 The death, the birth;
 Grief, when days alter,
 Like joy shall falter;
 Song-book and psalter,
 Mourning and mirth.
 Live like the swallow;
 Seek not to follow
 Where earth is hollow
 Under the earth.

IN THE ORCHARD.

(PROVENÇAL BURDEN.)

LEAVE go my hands, let me catch breath
 and see;
 Let the dew-fall drench either side of me;
 Clear apple-leaves are soft upon that
 moon
 Seen sidelong like a blossom in the tree;
 Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

The grass is thick and cool, it lets us
 lie.
 Kissed upon either cheek and either
 eye,
 I turn to thee as some green afternoon
 Turns toward sunset, and is loth to die;
 Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

Lie closer, lean your face upon my side,
 Feel where the dew fell that has hardly
 dried,

Hear how the blood beats that went nigh
 to swoon;

The pleasure lives there when the sense
 has died;

Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

O my fair lord, I charge you leave me this:
 Is it not sweeter than a foolish kiss?

Nay take it then, my flower, my first in
 June,

My rose, so like a tender mouth it is :

Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

Love, till dawn sunder night from day
 with fire,

Dividing my delight and my desire,

The crescent life and love the plenilune,
 Love me though dusk begin and dark re-
 tire;

Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

Ah, my heart fails my blood draws back ;
 I know,

When life runs over, life is near to go ;

And with the slain of love love's ways
 are strewn,

And with their blood, if love will have it
 so ;

Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

Ah, dothy will now ; slay me if thou wilt;
 There is no building now the walls are
 built,

No quarrying now the corner-stone is
 hewn,

No drinking now the vine's whole blood is
 spilt ;

Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

Nay, slay me now ; nay, for I will be slain;
 Pluck thy red pleasure from the teeth of
 pain,

Break down thy vine ere yet grape-
 gatherers prune,

Slay me ere day can slay desire again ;

Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

Yea, with thy sweet lips, with thy sweet
 sword; yea,

Take life and all, for I will die, I say;

Love, I gave love, is life a better boon?
 For sweet night's sake I will not live till
 day;

Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

Nay, I will sleep then only; nay, but go.

Ah sweet, too sweet to me, my sweet, I
 know

Love, sleep, and death go to the sweet
 same tune;

Hold my hair fast, and kiss me through
 it so.

Ah God, ah God, that day should be so
 soon.

A MATCH.

If love were what the rose is,
 And I were like the leaf,
 Our lives would grow together
 In sad or singing weather,
 Blown fields or flowerful closes,
 Green pleasure or grey grief;
 If love were what the rose is,
 And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
 And love were like the tune,
 With double sound and single
 Delight our lips would mingle,
 With kisses glad as birds are
 That get sweet rain at noon;
 If I were what the words are
 And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
 And I your love were death,
 We'd shine and snow together
 Ere March made sweet the weather
 With da'fodil and starling
 And hours of fruitful breath;
 If you were life, my darling,
 And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
 And I were page to joy,
 We'd play for lives and seasons
 With loving looks and treasours
 And tears of night and morrow
 And laughs of maid and boy;
 If you were thrall to sorrow,
 And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
 And I were lord in May,
 We'd throw with leaves for hours
 And draw for days with flowers,
 Till day like night were shady
 And night were bright like day;
 If you were April's lady,
 And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
 And I were king of pain,
 We'd hunt down love together,
 Pluck out his flying-feather,
 And teach his feet a measure,
 And find his mouth a rein;
 If you were queen of pleasure,
 And I were king of pain.

FAUSTINE.

Ave Faustina Imperatrix, morituri te salutant.

LEAN back, and get some minutes' peace;
 Let your head lean
 Back to the shoulder with its fleecy
 Of locks, Faustine.

The shapely silver shoulder stoops,
 Weighed over clean
 With state of splendid hair that droops
 Each side, Faustine.

Let me go over your good gifts
 That crown you queen;
 A queen whose kingdom ebbs and shifts
 Each week, Faustine.

Bright heavy brow well gathered up:
 White gloss and sheen;
 Carved lips that make my lips a cup
 To drink, Faustine.

Wine and rank poison, milk and blood,
 Being mixed therein

Since first the devil threw dice with God
 For you, Faustine.

Your naked new-born soul, their stake,
 Stood blind between;
 God said "let him that wins her take
 And keep Faustine."

But this time Satan throve, no doubt;
 Long since, I ween,
 God's part in you was battered out;
 Long since, Faustine.

The die rang sideways as it fell,
 Rang cracked and thin,
 Like a man's laughter heard in hell
 Far down, Faustine.

A shadow of laughter like a sigh,
 Dead sorrow's kin;
 So rang, thrown down, the devil's die
 That won Faustine.

A suckling of his breed you were,
One hard to wean;
But God, who lost you, left you fair,
We see, Faustine.

You have the face that suits a woman
For her soul's screen—
The sort of beauty that's called human
In hell, Faustine.

You could do all things but be good
Or chaste of mien;
And that you would not if you could,
We know, Faustine.

Even he who cast seven devils out
Of Magdalene
Could hardly do as much, I doubt,
For you, Faustine.

Did Satan make you to spite God?
Or did God mean
To scourge with scorpions for a rod
Our sins, Faustine?

I know what queen at first you were,
As though I had seen
Red gold and black imperious hair
Twice crown Faustine.

As if your fed sarcophagus
Spared flesh and skin,
You come back face to face with us,
The same Faustine.

She loved the games men played with death,
Where death must win;
As though the slain man's blood and breath
Revived Faustine.

Nets caught the pike, pikes tore the net;
Lithe limbs and lean
From drained-out pores dripped thick red
sweat
To soothe Faustine.

She drank the steaming drift and dust
Blown off the scene;
Blood could not ease the bitter lust
That galled Faustine.

All round the foul fat furrows reeked,
Where blood sank in;
The circus splashed and seethed and shrieked
All round Faustine.

But these are gone now: years entomb
The dust and din;
Yea, even the bath's fierce reek and fume
That slew Faustine.

Was life worth living then? and now
Is life worth sin?
Where are the imperial years? and how
Are you, Faustine?

Your soul forgot her joys, forgot
Her times of teen;
Yea, this life likewise will you not
Forget, Faustine?

For in the time we know not of
Did fate begin
Weaving the web of days that wove
Your doom, Faustine.

The threads were wet with wine, and all
Were smooth to spin;
They wove you like a Bacchanal,
The first Faustine.

And Bacchus cast your mates and you
Wild grapes to glean;
Your flower-like lips dashed with dew
From his, Faustine.

Your drenched loose hands were stretched
to hold
The vine's wet green,
Long ere they coined in Roman gold
Your face, Faustine.

Then after change of soaring feather
And winnowing fin,
You woke in weeks of feverish weather,
A new Faustine.

A star upon your birthday burned,
Whose fierce serene
Red pulseless planet never yearned
In heaven, Faustine.

Stray breaths of Sapphic song that blew
Through Mitylene
Shook the fierce quivering blood in you
By night, Faustine.

The shameless nameless loves that makes
Hell's iron gin
Shut on you like a trap that breaks
The soul, Faustine.

And when your veins were void and dead,
What ghosts unclean
Swarmed round the straitened barren bed
That hid Faustine ?

What sterile growths of sexless root
Or epicene ?
What flower of kisses without fruit
Of love, Faustine ?

What adders came to shed their coats ?
What coiled obscene
Small serpents with soft stretching throats
Caressed Faustine ?

But the time came of famished hours,
Maimed loves and mean,
This ghastly thin-faced time of ours,
To spoil Faustine.

You seem a thing that hinges hold,
A love-machine
With clockwork joints of supple gold—
No more, Faustine.

Not godless, for you serve one God,
The Lampsacene,
Who metes the gardens with his rod ;
Your lord, Faustine.

If one should love you with real love
(Such things have been,
Things your fair face knows nothing of,
It seems, Faustine) ;

That clear hair heavily bound back,
The lights wherein
Shift from dead blue to burnt-up black ;
Your throat, Faustine,

Strong, heavy, throwing out the face
And hard bright chin
And shameful scornful lips that grace
Their shame, Faustine,

Curled lips, long since half kissed away,
Still sweet and keen ;
You'd give him—poison shall we say ?
Or what, Faustine ?

A CAMEO.

THERE was a graven image of Desire
Painted with red blood on a ground
of gold
Passing between the young men and
the old,
And by him Pain, whose body shone like
fire,
And Pleasure with gaunt hands that grasp-
ed their hire.
Of his left wrist, with fingers clenched
and cold,
The insatiable Satiety kept hold.

Walking with feet unshod that pashed the
mire,
The senses and the sorrows and the sins,
And the strange loves that suck the
breasts of Hate
Till lips and teeth bite in their sharp
indenture,
Followed like beasts with flap of wings
and fins. [grate,
Death stood aloof behind a gaping
Upon whose lock was written *Perad-
venture.*

SONG BEFORE DEATH.

(FROM THE FRENCH.)

1795

SWEET mother, in a minute's span
Death parts thee and my love of thee
Sweet love, that yet art living man,

Come back, true love, to comfort me.
Back, ah, come back ! ah wellaway !
But my love comes not any day.

As roses, when the warm West blows,
 Break to full flower and sweeten spring,
 My soul would break to a glorious rose
 In such wise at his whispering
 In vain I listen ; wellaway !
 My love says nothing any day.

You that will weep for pity of love
 On the low place where I am lain,
 I pray you, having wept enough,
 Tell him for whom I bore such pain
 That he was yet, ah ! wellaway !
 My true love to my dying day.

ROCCO.

TAKE hand and part with laughter;
 Touch lips and part with tears;
 Once more and no more after,
 Whatever comes with years.
 We twain shall not remeasure
 The ways that left us twain;
 Nor crush the lees of pleasure
 From sanguine grapes of pain.

We twain once well in sunder,
 What will the mad go is do
 For hate with me, I wonder,
 Or what for love with you ?
 Forget them till November,
 And dream there's April yet,
 Forget that I remember,
 And dream that I forget.

Time found our tired love sleeping,
 And kissed away his breath;
 But what should we do weeping,
 Though light love sleep to death ?
 We have drained his lips at leisure,
 Till there's not left to drain
 A single sob of pleasure,
 A single pulse of pain.

Dream that the lips once breathless
 Might quicken if they would;
 Say that the soul is deathless;
 Dream that the gods are good;
 Say march may wed September,
 And time divorce regret;
 But not that you remember,
 And not that I forget.

We have heard from hidden places
 What love scarce lives and hears:
 We have seen on fervent faces
 The pallor of strange tears:
 We have trod the wine-vats treasure,
 Whence, ripe to steam and stain,
 Foams round the feet of pleasure
 The blood-red must of pain.

Remembrance may recover
 And time bring back to time
 The name of your first lover,
 The ring of my first rhyme;
 But rose-leaves of December
 The frosts of June shall fret,
 The day that you remember,
 The day that I forget.

The snake that hides and hisses
 In heaven we twain have known;
 The grief of cruel kisses,
 The joy whose mouth makes moan;
 The pulses pause and measure,
 Where in one furtive vein
 Throbs through the heart of pleasure
 The purpler blood of pain.

We have done with tears and treasons
 And love for treason's sake;
 Room for the swift new seasons,
 The years that burn and break,
 Disarm and dismember
 Men's days and dreams, Juliette;
 For love may not remember,
 But time will not forget.

Life treads down love in flying,
 Time withers him at root;
 Bring all dead things and dying,
 Reaped sheaf and ruined fruit,
 Where, crushed by three days' pressure
 Our three days' love lies slain;
 And earlier leaf of pleasure,
 And latter flower of pain.

Breathe close upon the ashes,
 It may be flame will leap;
 Unclose the soft close lashes,
 Lift up the lids and weep.
 Light love's extinguished ember,
 Let one tear leave it wet
 For one that you remember
 And ten that you forget.

STAGE LOVE.

WHEN the game began between them for
 a jest,
 He played king and she played queen to
 match the best;
 Laughter soft as tears, and tears that turned
 to laughter,
 These were things she sought for years and
 sorrowed after.

Pleasure with dry lips, and pain that walks
 by night;
 All the sting and all the stain of long de-
 light;
 These were things she knew not of, that
 knew not of her.
 When she played at half a love with half a
 lover.

Time was chorus, gave them cues to laugh
 or cry;
 They would kill, befool, amuse him, let
 him die;
 Set him webs to weave to-day and break
 to-morrow,
 Till he died for good in play, and rose in
 sorrow.

What the years mean; how times dies and
 is not slain;
 How love grows and laughs and cries and
 wanes again;
 These were things she came to know, and
 take their measure,
 When the play was played out so for one
 man's pleasure.

THE LEPER.

NOTHING is better, I well think,
 Than love; the hidden well-water
 Is not so delicate to drink:
 This was well seen of me and her.

I served her in a royal house;
 I served her wine and curious meat
 For will to kiss between her brows
 I had no heart to sleep or eat.

Mere scorn God knows she had of me;
 A poor scribe, nowise great or fair,
 Who plucked his clerk's hood back to see
 Her curled up lips and amorous hair.

I vex my head with thinking this.
 Yea, though God always hated me,
 And hates me now that I can kiss
 Her eyes, plait up her hair to see

How she then wore it on the brows,
 Yet am I glad to have her dead
 Here in this wretched wattled house
 Where I can kiss her eyes and head.

Nothing is better, I well know,
 Than love; no amber in cold sea
 Or gathered berries under snow:
 That is well seen of her and me.

Three thoughts I make my pleasure of:
 First I take heart and think of this:
 That knight's gold hair she chose to love,
 His mouth she had such will to kiss.

Then I remember that sundawn
 I brought him by a privy way
 Out at her lattice, and thereon
 What gracious words she found to say.

(Cold rushes for such little feet—
 Both feet could lie into my hand.
 A marvel was it of my sweet
 Her upright body could so stand.)

"Sweet friend, God give you thank and
 grace
 Now am I clean and whole of shame,
 Nor shall men burn me in the face
 For my sweet fault that scandals them."

I tell you over word by word.
 She, sitting edgewise on her bed,
 Holding her feet, said thus. The third,
 A sweeter thing than these, I said.

God, that makes time and ruins it,
 And alters not abiding God,
 Changed with disease her body sweet,
 The body of love wherein she abode.

Love is more sweet and comlier
 Than a dove's throat strained out to sing.
 All they spat out and cursed at her
 And cast her forth for a base thing.

They cursed her, seeing how God had
 wrought

This curse to plague her, a curse of his.
 Fools were they surely, seeing not
 How sweeter than all sweet she is.

He that had held her by the hair,
 With kissing lips blinding her eyes,
 Felt her bright bosom, strained and bare,
 Sigh under him, with short mad cries

Out of her throat and sobbing mouth
 And body broken up with love,
 With sweet hot tears his lips were loth
 Her own should taste the savor of,

Yea, he inside whose grasp all night
 Her fervent body leapt or lay,
 Stained with sharp kisses red and white,
 Found her a plague to spurn away.

I hid her in this wattled house,
 I served her water and poor bread,
 For joy to kiss between her brows
 Time upon time I was nigh dead.

Bread failed; we got but well-water
 And gathered grass with dropping seed.
 I had such joy of kissing her,
 I had small care to sleep or feed.

Sometimes when service made me glad
 The sharp tears leapt between my lids,
 Falling on her, such joy I had
 To do the service God forbids.

"I pray you let me be at peace,
 Get hence, make room for me to die."
 She said that: her poor lip would cease,
 Put up to mine, and turn to cry.

I said, "Bethink yourself how love
 Fared in us twain, what either did;
 Shall I unclothe my soul thereof?
 That I should do this, God forbid."

Yea, though God hateth us, he knows
 That hardly in a little thing
 Love faileth of the work it does
 Till it grow ripe for gathering.

Six months, and now my sweet is dead
 A trouble takes me; I know not
 If all were done well, all well said,
 No word or tender deed forgot.

Too sweet, for the least part in her,
To have shed life out by fragments; yet,
Could the close mouth catch breath and
 stir,
I might see something I forget.

Six months, and I sit still and hold
In two cold palms her cold two feet.
Her hair, half grey half ruined gold,
Thrills me and burns me in kissing it.

Love bites and stings me through, to see
Her keen face made of sunken bones.
Her worn-off eyelids madden me,
That were shot through with purple once.

She said, "Be good with me; I grow
So tired for shame's sake, I shall die
If you say nothing;" even so.
And she is dead now and shame put by.

Yea, and the scorn she had of me
In the old time, doubtless vexed her
then.

I never should have kissed her. See
What fools God's anger makes of men!

She might have loved me a little too,
Had I been humbler for her sake.

But that new shame could make love new
She saw not—yet her shame did make.

I took too much upon my love,
Having for such mean service done
Her beauty and all the ways thereof,
Her face and all the sweet thereon.

Yea, all this while I tended her.
I know the old love held fast his part :
I know the old scorn waxed heavier,
Mixed with sad wonder, in her heart.

It may be all my love went wrong—
A scribe's work writ awry and blurred,
Scrawled after the blind evensong—
Spoilt music with no perfect word.

But surely I would fain have done
All things the best I could. Perchance
Because I failed, came short of one,
She kept at heart that other man's.

I am grown blind with all these things :
It may be now she hath in sight
Some better knowledge ; still there clings
The old question. Will not God do
right?

En ce temps-là estoit dans ce pays grand nombre de ladies et de meseaulx, ce dont le roy eut grand desplaisir, ven que Dieu dust en estre moult grievement courroucé. Ors il advint qu'une noble damoyelle appelée Yolande de Sallières estant atteincte et toustes guastée de ce vilain mal, tous ses amys et ses parens ayant devant leurs yeux la paour de Dieu la firent issir fors de leurs maisons, et oncques ne voulurent recevoir ni reconforter chose maudicte de Dieu et à tous les hommes puante et abhominable. Ceste dame avoyt esté moult belle et gracieuse de formes, et de son corps elle estoit large et de vie lascive. Pourtant nul des amans qui l'avoient souventesfois accollée et basiée moult tendrement ne voulust plus héberger si laide femme et si détestable pescheresse. Ung seul clerc qui feut premièrement son lacquays et son entremetteur en matière d'amour la recut chez luy et la récéla dans une petite cabane. Là mourut la meschinette de grande misère et de male mort : et après elle décéda ledist clerc qui pour grand amour l'aveyt six mois durant soignée, lavée, habillée et deshabillée tous les jours de ses mains propres. Mesme dist-on que ce meschant homme et maudict clerc remémorant de la grande beauté passée et guastée de ceste femme se délectoyt maintesfois à la baiser sur sa bouche orde et l'epreuve et l'accoller doucement de ses mains amoureuses. Aussi est il mort de ceste mesme maladie abhominable. Cery advint près Fontainebeillant en Gastinois. Et quand ouyt le roy Philippe ceste aventure moult en estoit esmerveillé.

Grandes Chroniques de France, 1505.

A BALLAD OF BURDENS.

THE burden of fair women. Vain delight,
 And love self-slain in some sweet shameful way,
 And sorrowful old age that comes by night
 As a thief comes that has no heart by day,
 And change that finds fair cheeks and leaves them grey,
 And weariness that keeps awake for hire,
 And grief that says what pleasure used to say;
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bought kisses. This is sore,
 A burden without fruit in childbearing;
 Between the nightfall and the dawn three-score,
 Threescore between the dawn and evening,
 The shuddering in thy lips, the shuddering
 In thy sad eyelids tremulous like fire,
 Makes love seem shameful and a wretched thing.
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sweet speeches. Nay, kneel down,
 Cover thy head, and weep; for verily
 These market-men that buy thy white and brown
 In the last days shall take no thought for thee.
 In the last days like earth thy face shall be,
 Yea, like sea-marsh made thick with brine and mire,
 Sad with sick leavings of the sterile sea.
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of long living. Thou shalt fear
 Waking, and sleeping mourn upon thy bed;
 And say at night "Would God the day were here,"
 And say at dawn "Would God the day were dead."

With weary days thou shalt be clothed and fed,
 And wear remorse of heart for thine attire,
 Pain for thy girdle and sorrow upon thine head;
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bright colors. Thou shalt see
 Gold tarnished, and the grey above the green;
 And as the thing thou seest thy face shall be,
 And no more as the thing belorettime seen.
 And thou shalt say of mercy "It hath been,"
 And living, watch the old lips and loves expire,
 And talking, tears shall take thy breath between.
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sad sayings. In that day
 Thou shalt tell all thy days and hours, and tell
 Thy times and ways and words of love, and say
 How one was dear and one desirable,
 And sweet was life to hear and sweet to smell,
 But now with lights reverse the old hours retire
 And the last hour is shod with fire from hell.
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of four seasons. Rain in spring,
 White rain and wind among the tender trees;
 A summer of green sorrows gathering,
 Rank autumn in a mist of miseries,
 With sad face set towards the year, that sees
 The charred ash drop out of the dropping pyre,
 And winter wan with many maladies;
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of dead faces. Out of sight
 And out of love, beyond the reach of
 hands,
Changed in the changing of the dark and
 light,
 They walk and weep about the barren
 lands
 Where no seed is nor any garner stands,
Where in short breaths the doubtful days
 respire,
 And time's turned glass lets through the
 sighing sands;
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of much gladness. Life and
 lust
 Forsake thee, and the face of thy delight;
And underfoot the heavy hour strews dust;

And overhead strange weathers burn and
 bite;
 And where the red was, lo the bloodless
 white,
 And where truth was, the likeness of a
 liar,
 And where day was, the likeness of the
 night;
 This is the end of every man's desire.

L'ENVOY.

Princes, and ye whom pleasure quickeneth,
 Heed well this rhyme before your plea-
 sure tire;
 For life is sweet, but after life is death.
 This is the end of every man's desire.

RONDEL.

Kissing her hair I sat against her feet,
Wove and unwove it, wound and found it
 sweet
Made fast therewith her hands, drew down
 her eyes,
Deep as deep flowers and dreamy like dim
 skies;
With her own tresses bound and found her
 fair,
 Kissing her hair.

Sleep were no sweeter than her face to me,
 Sleep of cold sea-bloom under the cold sea;
 What pain could get between my face and
 hers?
 What new sweet thing would love not relish
 worse?
 Unless, perhaps, white death had kissed
 me there,
 Kissing her hair?

BEFORE THE MIRROR.

(VERSES WRITTEN UNDER A PICTURE.)

INSCRIBED TO J. A. WHISTLER.

WHITE rose in red rose-garden
 Is not so white;
Snowdrops that plead for pardon

And pine for fright
 Because the hard East blows
 Over their maiden rows
 Grow not as this face grows from pale to
 bright.

Behind the veil, forbidden
 Shut up from sight,
 Love, is there sorrow hidden,
 Is there delight?
 Is joy thy dower of grief,
 White rose of weary leaf,
 Late rose whose life is brief, whose loves
 are light?

Soft snows that hard winds harden
 Till each flake bite
 Fill all the flowerless garden
 Whose flowers took flight
 Long since when summer ceased,
 And men rose up from feast.
 And warm west wind grew east, and
 warm day night.

II.

"Come snow, come wind or thunder
 High up in air,
 I watch my face, and wonder
 At my bright hair;
 Nought else exalts or grieves
 The rose at heart, that heaves
 With love of her own leaves and lips that
 pair.

"She knows not loves that kissed her
 She knows not where,
 Art thou the ghost, my sister,
 White sister there,
 Am I the ghost, who knows?
 My hand, a fallen rose,
 Lies snow-white on white snows, and
 takes no care.

"I cannot see what pleasures
 Or what pains were;
 What pale new loves and treasures
 New years will bear;
 What beam will fall, what shower,
 What grief or joy for dower;
 But one thing knows the flower; the
 flower is fair."

III.

Glad, but not flushed with gladness,
 Since joys go by;
 Sad, but not bent with sadness,
 Since sorrows die;
 Deep in the gleaming glass
 She sees all past things pass,
 And all sweet life that was lie down and
 lie.

There glowing ghosts of flowers
 Draw down, draw nigh;
 And wings of swift spent hours
 Take flight and fly;
 She sees by formless gleams,
 She hears across cold streams,
 Dead mouths of many dreams that sing
 and sigh.

Face fallen and white throat lifted,
 With sleepless eye
 She sees old loves that drifted,
 She knew not why,
 Old loves and faded fears
 Float down a stream that hears
 The flowing of all men's tears beneath
 the sky.

EROTION.

SWEET for a little even to fear, and sweet,
 O love, to lay down fear at love's fair feet;
 Shall not some fiery memory of his breath
 Lie sweet on lips that touch the lips of
 death?

Yet leave me not; yet, if thou wilt, be free;
 Love me no more, but love my love of thee.
 Love where thou wilt, and live thy life;
 and I,
 One thing I can, and one love cannot—die.

Pass from me; yet thine arms, thine eyes,
 thine hair,
 Feed my desire and deaden my despair.
 Yet once more ere time change us, ere my
 cheek

Whiten, ere hope be dumb or sorrow speak,
 Yet once more ere thou hate me, one full
 kiss;
 Keep other hours for others, save me this.
 Yea, and I will not (if it please thee) weep,

Lest thou be sad; I will but sigh, and sleep.
Sweet, does death hurt? thou canst not do
me wrong:

I shall not lack thee, as I loved thee, long.
Hast thou not given me above all that live
Joy, and a little sorrow shalt not give?

What even though fairer fingers of strange
girls

Pass nestling through thy beautiful boy's
curls

As mine did, or those curled lithe lips of
thine

Meet theirs as these, all theirs come after
mine;

And though I were not, though I be not,
best,

I have loved and love thee more than all
the rest.

O love, O lover, loose or hold me fast,
I had thee first, whoever have thee last;

Fairer or not, what need I know, what care?
To thy fair bud my blossom once seemed
fair.

Why am I fair at all before thee, why
At all desired? seeing thou art fair, not I.
I shall be glad of thee, O fairest head,
Alive, alone, without thee, with thee, dead;
I shall remember while the light lives yet.
And in the night-time I shall not forget.
Though (as thou wilt) thou leave me ere
life leave,

I will not, for thy love I will not, grieve;
Not as they use who love not more than I,
Who love not as I love thee though I die;
And though thy lips, once mine, be oftener
prest

To many another brow and balmier breast,
And sweeter arms, or sweeter to thy mind,
Lull thee or lure, more fond thou wilt not
find.

IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

BACK to the flower-town, side by side,
The bright months bring,
New-born, the bridegroom and the bride,
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,
Filled full of sun;
All things come back to her, being free;
All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot
Flowers that were dead
Live, and old suns revive; but not
That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea,
Far north, I hear
One face shall never turn to me
As once this year:

Shall never smile and turn and rest
On mine as there,
Nor one most sacred hand be prest
Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,
Half run before;
The youngest to the oldest singer
That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find
Till all grief end,
In holiest age our mightiest mind,
Father and friend.

But thou, if anything endure,
If hope there be,
O spirit that man's life left pure,
Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were
 Look earthward now;
 Let dreams revive the reverend hair,
 The imperial brow;
 Come back in sleep, for in the life
 Where thou art not
 We find none like thee. Time and strife
 And the world's lot.
 Move thee no more; but love at least
 And reverent heart

May move thee, royal and released,
 Soul, as thou art.
 And thou, his Florence, to thy trust
 Receive and keep,
 Keep safe his dedicated dust,
 His sacred sleep.
 So shall thy lovers, come from far,
 Mix with thy name
 As morning-star with evening-star
 His faultless fame.

A SONG IN TIME OF ORDER. 1852.

PUSH hard across the sand,
 For the salt wind gathers breath;
 Shoulder and wrist and hand,
 Push hard as the push of death.
 The wind is as iron that rings,
 The foam-heads loosen and flee;
 It swells and welters and swings,
 The pulse of the tide of the sea.
 And up on the yellow cliff
 The long corn flickers and shakes;
 Push, for the wind holds stiff,
 And the gunwale dips and rakes.
 Good hap to the fresh fierce weather,
 The quiver and beat of the sea!
 While three men hold together,
 The kingdoms are less by three.
 Out to the sea with her there,
 Out with her over the sand,
 Let the kings keep the earth for their share!
 We have done with the sharers of land.
 They have tied the world in a tether,
 They have bought over God with a fee;
 While three men hold together,
 The kingdoms are less by three.

We have done with the kisses that sting,
 The thief's mouth red from the feast,
 The blood on the hands of the king,
 And the lie at the lips of the priest.
 Will they tie the winds in a tether,
 Put a bit in the jaws of the sea?
 While three men hold together,
 The kingdoms are less by three.
 Let our flag run out straight in the wind!
 The old red shall be floated again
 When the rank that are thin shall be
 thinned,
 When the names that were twenty are
 ten;
 When the devil's riddle is mastered
 And the galley-bench creaks with a
 Pope,
 We shall see Buonaparte the bastard
 Kick heels with his throat in a rope.
 While the shepherd sets wolves on his
 sheep
 And the emperor halts his kine,
 While Shame is a watchman asleep
 And Faith is a keeper of swine,

Let the wind shake our flag like a feather,
 Like the plumes of the foam of the sea!
 While three men hold together,
 The kingdoms are less by three.

All the world has its burdens to bear,
 From Cayenne to the Austrian whips;

Forth, with the rain in our hair
 And the salt sweet foam in our lips;

In the teeth of the hard glad weather,
 In the blown wet face of the sea;
 While three men hold together,
 The kingdoms are less by three.

A SONG IN TIME OF REVOLUTION. 1860.

THE heart of the rulers is sick, and the
 high-priest covers his head:
 For this is the song of the quick that is
 heard in the ears of the dead.

The poor and the halt and the blind are
 keen and mighty and fleet:
 Like the noise of the blowing of wind is
 the sound of the noise of their feet.

The wind has the sound of a laugh in the
 clamor of days and of deed:
The priests are scattered like chaff, and
 the rulers broken like reeds.

The high-priest sick from qualms, with his
 raiment bloodily dashed;
The thief with branded palms, and the liar
 with cheeks abashed.

They are smitten, they tremble greatly, they
 are pained for their pleasant things:
For the house of the priests made stately,
 and the might in the mouth of the
 kings.

They are grieved and greatly afraid; they
 are taken, they shall not flee:
For the heart of the nations is made as the
 strength of the springs of the sea.

They were fair in the grace of gold, they
 walked with delicate feet:
They were clothed with the cunning of old,
 and the smell of their garments was
 sweet.

For the breaking of gold in their hair they
 halt as a man made lame:
They are utterly naked and bare; their
 mouths are bitter with shame.

Wilt thou judge thy people now, O king
 that wast found most wise?
 Wilt thou lie any more, O thou whose
 mouth is emptied of lies?

Shall God make a pact with thee, till his
 hook be found in thy sides?
 Wilt thou put back the time of the sea, or
 the place of the season of tides?

Set a word in thy lips, to stand before God
 with a word in thy mouth:
 That "the rain shall return in the land,
 and the tender dew after drouth."

But the arm of the elders is broken, their
 strength is unbound and undone:
They wait for a sign of a token; they cry,
 and there cometh none.

Their moan is in every place, the cry of
 them filleth the land:
 There is shame in the sight of their face,
 there is fear in the thews of their hand.

They are girdled about the reins with a
 curse for the girdle thereon:
For the noise of the rending of chains the
 face of their color is gone.

For the sound of the shouting of men they
are grievously stricken at heart:
They are smitten asunder with pain, their
bones are smitten apart.

There is none of them all that is whole;
their lips gape open for breath:
They are clothed with sickness of soul,
and the shape of the shadow of death.

The wind is thwart in their feet; it is full
of the shouting of mirth;
As one shaketh the sides of a sheet so it
shaketh the ends of the earth.

The sword, the sword is made keen; the
iron has opened its mouth;
The corn is red that was green; it is bound
for the sheaves of the south.

The sound of a word was shed, the sound
of the wind as a breath

In the ears of the souls that were dead, in
the dust of the deepness of death;

Where the face of the moon is taken, the
ways of the stars undone,
The light of the whole sky shaken, the
light of the face of the sun:

Where the waters are emptied and broken,
the waves of the waters are stayed;
Where God has bound for a token the
darkness that maketh afraid;

Where the sword was covered and hidden,
and dust had grown in its side,
A word came forth which was hidden, the
crying of one that cried:

The sides of the two-edged sword shall be
bare, and its mouth shall be red,
For the breath of the face of the Lord that
is felt in the bones of the dead,

TO VICTOR HUGO.

IN the fair days when God
By man as godlike trod,
And each alike was Greek, alike was free,
God's lightning spared, they said,
Alone the happier head
Whose laurels screened it; fruitless grace
for thee,
To whom the high gods gave of right
Their thunders and their laurels and their
light.

Sunbeams and bays before
Our master's servants wore,
For these Appollo left in all men's lands
But far from these ere now
And watched with jealous brow
Lay the blind lightnings shut between
God's hands,
And only loosed on slaves and kings
The terror of the tempest of their wings.

Born in those younger years
That shone with storms of spears
And shook in the wind blown from a dead
world's pyre,
When by her back-blown hair
Napoleon caught the fair
And fierce Republic with her feet of fire,
And stayed with iron words and hands
Her flight, and freedom in a thousand lands:

Thou sawest the tides of things
Close over heads of kings,
And thine hand felt the thunder and to
thee
Laurels and lightnings were
As sunbeams and soft air
Mixed each in other, or as mist with sea
Mixed, or as memory with desire,
Or the lute's pulses with the louder lyre.

For thee man's spirit stood
 Disrobed of flesh and blood,
 And bear the heart of the most secret hours;
 And to thine hand more tame
 Than birds in winter came
 High hopes and unknown flying forms of
 powers,
 And from thy table fed, and sang
 Till with the tune men's ears took fire and
 rang.

Even all men's eyes and ears
 With fiery sound and tears
 Waxed hot, and cheeks caught flame and
 eyelids light,
 At those high songs of thine
 That stung the sense like wine.
 Or fell more soft than dew or snow by
 night,
 Or wailed as in some flooded cave
 Sobs the strong broken spirit of a wave.

But we, our master, we
 Whose hearts, uplift to thee,
 Ache with the pulse of thy remembered
 song,
 We ask not nor await
 From the clenched hands of fate,
 As thou, remission of the world's old
 wrong;
 Respite we ask not, nor release;
 Freedom a man may have, he shall not
 peace.

Though thy most fiery hope
 Storm heaven, to set wide ope
 The all-sought-for gate whence God or
 Chance debars
 All feet of men, all eyes—
 The old night resumes her skies,
 Her hollow hiding-place of clouds and
 stars,
 Where nought save these is sure in
 sight
 And, paven with death, our days are
 roofed with night.

One thing we can; to be
 Awhile, as men may, free;
 But not by hope or pleasure the most stern
 Goddess, most awful-eyed,
 Sits, but on either side
 Sits sorrow and the wrath of hearts that
 burn,
 Sad faith, that cannot hope or fear,

And memory grey with many a flowerless
 year.

Not that in stranger's wise
 I lift not loving eyes
 To the fair foster-mother France, that gave
 Beyond the pale fleet foam
 Help to my sires and home,
 Whose great sweet breast could shelter
 those and save
 Whom from her nursing breasts and
 hands
 Their land cast forth of old on gentler
 lands.

Not without thoughts that ache
 For theirs and for thy sake,
 I, born o' exiles, hail thy banished head
 I whose young song took flight
 Toward the great heat and light
 On me a child from thy far splendor shed,
 From thine high place of soul and
 song,
 Which, fallen on eyes yet feeble, made
 them strong.

Ah, not with lessening love,
 For memories born hereof,
 I look to that sweet mother-land, and see
 The old fields and fair full streams,
 And skies, but fled like dreams
 The feet of freedom and the thought of
 thee;
 And all between the skies and graves
 The mirth of mockers and the shame of
 slaves.

She, killed with noisome air,
 Even she! and still so fair,
 Who said "Let there be freedom," and
 there was
 Freedom; and as a lance
 The fiery eyes of France
 Touched the world's sleep and as a sleep
 made pass
 Forth of men's heavier ears and eyes
 Smitten with fire and thunder from new
 skies.

Are they men's friends indeed
 Who watch them weep and bleed?
 Because thou hast loved us, shall the gods
 love thee?
 Thou first of men and friend,
 Seest thou, even thou, the end?

Thou knowest what hath been, knowest
 thou what shall be ?
 Evils may pass and hopes endure;
 But fade is dim, and all the gods obscure.

O nursed in airs apart,
 O poet highest of heart,
 Hast thou seen time, who hast seen so
 many things ?
 Are not the years more wise,
 More sad than keenest eyes,
 The years with soundless feet and sounding
 wings ?
 Passing we hear them not, but past
 The clamor of them thrills us, and their
 blast.

Thou art chief of us, and lord;
 Thy song is as a sword
 Keen-edged and scented in the blade from
 flowers;
 Thou art lord and king but we
 Lift younger eyes; and see
 Less of high hope, less light on wandering
 hours ;
 Hours that have borne men down so
 long,
 Seen the right fail, and watched uplift the
 wrong.

But thine imperial soul
 As years and ruins roll
 To the same end, and all things and all
 dreams
 With the same wreck and roar
 Drift on the dim same shore,
 Still in the bitter foam and brackish
 streams
 Tracks the fresh water-spring to be
 And sudden sweeter fountains in the sea.

As once the high God bound
 With many a rivet round
 Man's saviour, and with iron nailed him
 through,
 At the wild end of things,
 Where even his own bird's wings
 Flagged whence the sea shone like a drop
 of dew,
 From Caucasus beheld below
 Past fathoms of unfathomable snow;

So the strong God, the chance
 Central of circumstance,
 Still shows him exile who will not be slave;

All thy great fame and thee
 Girt by the dim strait sea
 With multitudinous walls of wandering
 wave;
 Shows us our greatest from his throne
 Fate-stricken, and rejected of his own.

Yea, he is strong, thou say'st,
 A mystery many-faced,
 The wild beasts know him and the wild
 birds flee;
 The blind night sees him, death
 Shrinks beaten at his breath,
 And his right hand is heavy on the sea:
 We know he hath made us, and is
 king;
 We know not if he care for anything.

Thus much, no more, we know;
 He bade what is be so,
 Bade light be and bade night be, one by
 one;
 Bade hope and fear, bade ill
 And good redeem and kill,
 Till all men be awary of the sun
 And this world burn in its own flame
 And bear no witness longer of his name.

Yet though all this be thus,
 Be those men praised of us
 Who have loved and wrought and sorrowed
 and not sinned
 For fame or fear or gold,
 Nor waxed for winter cold,
 Nor changed for changes of the worldly
 wind;
 Praised above men of men be these.
 Till this one world and work we know
 shall cease.

Yea, one thing more than this,
 We know that one thing is,
 The splendor of a spirit without blame
 That not the laboring years
 Blind-born, nor any fears,
 Nor men nor any gods can tire or tame;
 But purer power with fiery breath
 Fills, and exalts above the gulfs of death.

Praised above men be thou,
 Whose laurel-laden brow,
 Made for the morning, droops not in the
 night;
 Praised and beloved, that none
 Of all thy great things done

Flies higher than thy most equal spirits flight; Praised, that nor doubt nor hope could bend	Earth's loftiest head, found upright to the end.
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BEFORE DAWN.

SWEET life, if life were stronger,
 Earth clear of years that wrong her
 Then two things might live longer
 Two sweeter things than they;
 Delight, the rootless flower,
 And love, the bloomless bower;
 Delight that lives an hour,
 And love that lives a day.

From evensong to daytime,
 When April melts in Maytime,
 Love lengthens out his playtime,
 Love lessens breath by breath,
 And kiss by kiss grows older
 On listless throat or shoulder
 Turned sidewise now, turned colder
 Than life that dreams of death.

This one thing once worth giving
 Life gave, and seemed worth living;
 Sin sweet beyond forgiving
 And brief beyond regret:
 To laugh and love together
 And weave with foam and feather
 And wind and words the tether
 Our memories play with yet.

Ah, one thing worth beginning,
 One thread in life worth spinning,
 Ah sweet, one sin worth sinning
 With all the whole soul's will;
 To lull you till one stilled you,
 To kiss you till one killed you,
 To feed you till one filled you,
 Sweet lips, if love could fill;

To hunt sweet Love and lose him
 Between white arms and bosom,
 Between the bud and blossom,
 Between your throat and chin;

To say of shame—what is it?
 Of virtue—we can miss it,
 Of sin—we can but kiss it,
 And it's no longer sin:

To feel the strong soul, stricken
 Through fleshly pulses, quicken
 Beneath swift sighs that thicken,
 Soft hands and lips that smite;
 Lips that no love can tire,
 With hands that sting like fire,
 Weaving the web Desire
 To snare the bird Delight.

But love so lightly plighted,
 Our love with torch unlighted,
 Paused near us unaffrighted,
 Who found and left him free;
 None, seeing us cloven in sunder,
 Will weep or laugh or wonder;
 Light love stands clear of thunder.
 And safe from winds at sea.

As, when late larks give warning,
 Of dying lights and dawning,
 Night murmurs to the morning,
 " Lie still, O love, lie still;
 And half her dark limbs cover
 The white limbs of her lover,
 With amorous plumes that hover
 And fervent lips that chill;

As scornful day represses
 Night's void and vain caresses,
 And from her cloudier tresses
 Unwinds the gold of his,
 With limbs from limbs dividing
 And breath by breath subsiding;
 For love has no abiding,
 But dies before the kiss.

So hath it been, so be it;
 For who shall live and flee it?
 But look that no man see it
 Or hear it unaware;

Lest all who love and choose him
 See Love, and so refuse him;
 For all who find him lose him,
 But all have found him fair.

DOLORES.

(NOTRE-DAME DES SEPT DOULEURS.)

COLD eyelids that hide like a jewel
 Hard eyes that grow soft for an hour :
 The heavy white limbs, and the cruel
 Red mouth like a venomous flower ;
 When these are gone by with their glories,
 What shall rest of thee then, what remain,
 O mystic and sombre Dolores
 Our Lady of Pain ?

Seven sorrows the priests give their Virgin;
 But thy sins, which are seventy times
 seven,
 Seven ages would fail thee to purge in,
 And then they would haunt thee in
 heaven:
 Fierce midnights and famishing morrows,
 And the loves that complete and control
 All the joys of the flesh, all the sorrows
 That wear out the soul.

O garment not golden but gilded,
 O garden where all men may dwell,
 O tower not of ivory, but builded
 By hands that reach heaven from hell;
 O mystical rose of the mire,
 O house not of gold but of gain.
 O house of unquenchable fire,
 Our Lady of Pain !

O lips full of lust and of laughter,
 Curled snakes that are fed from my breast
 Bite hard, lest remembrance come after
 Bite hard, lest remembrance come after
 And press with new lips where you
 pressed.
 For my heart too springs up at the pressure,

Mine eyelids too moisten and burn ;
 Ah, feed me and fill me with pleasure,
 Ere pain come in turn.

In yesterday's reach and to-morrow's,
 Out of sight though they lie of to-day,
 There have been and there yet shall be sor-
 rows,
 That smite not and bite not in play.
 The life and the love thou despisest,
 These hurt us indeed, and in vain,
 O wise among women, and wisest,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Who gave thee thy wisdom ? what stories
 That stung thee, what visions that smote?
 Wert thou pure and a maiden, Dolores,
 When desire took thee first by the throat?
 What bud was the shell of a blossom
 That all men may smell to and pluck ?
 What milk fed thee first at what bosom ?
 What sins gave thee suck ?

We shift and bedeck and bedrape us,
 Thou art noble and nude and antique;
 Libitina thy mother, Priapus
 Thy father, a Tuscan and Greek.
 We play with light loves in the portal,
 And wince and relent and refrain;
 Loves die, and we know thee immortal,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Fruits fail and love dies and time ranges;
 Thou art fed with perpetual breath,
 And alive after infinite changes,

And fresh from the kisses of death ;
Of languors rekindled and rallied,
Of barren delights and unclean,
Things monstrous and fruitless, a pallid
And poisonous queen.

Could you hurt me, sweet lips, though I
hurt you ?

Men touch them, and change in a trice
The lilies and languors of virtue
For the raptures and roses of vice;
Those lie where thy foot on the floor is,
These crown and caress thee and chain,
O splendid and sterile Dolores,
Our Lady of Pain.

There are sins it may be to discover,
There are deeds it may be to delight.
What new work wilt thou find for thy lover ?
What new passions for daytime or night ?
What spells that they know not a world of
Whose lives are as leaves overblown ?
What tortures undreamt of, unheard of,
Unwritten, unknown ?

Ah beautiful passionate body
That never has ached with a heart !
On thy mouth though the kisses are bloody,
Though they sting till it shudder and
smart,
More kind than the love we adore is.
They hurt not the heart or the brain,
O bitter and tender Dolores,
Our Lady of Pain.

As our kisses relax and redouble,
From the lips and the foam and the fangs
Shall no new sin be born for men's trouble,
No dream of impossible pangs ?
With the sweet of the sins of old ages
Wilt thou satiate thy soul as of yore ?
Too sweet is the rind, say the sages,
Too bitter the core.

Hast thou told all thy secrets the last time,
And bared all thy beauties to one ?
Ah, where shall we go then for pastime,
If the worst that can be has been done ?
But sweet as the rind was the core is ;
We are fain of thee still, we are fain,
O sanguine and subtle Dolores,
Our Lady of Pain.

By the hunger of change and emotion,
By the thirst of unbearable things,
By despair, the twin-born of devotion,

By the pleasure that winces and stings,
The delight that consumes the desire,
The desire that outruns the delight,
By the cruelty deaf as a fire
And blind as the night,

By the ravenous teeth that have smitten
Through the kisses that blossom and bud,
By the lips intertwisted and bitten
Till the foam has a savor of blood,
By the pulse as it rises and falters,
By the hands as they slacken and strain,
I adjure thee, respond from thine altars,
Our Lady of Pain.

Wilt thou smile as a woman disdain
The light fire in the veins of a boy ?
But he comes to thee sad, without feigning,
Who has wearied of sorrow and joy ;
Less careful of labor and glory
Than the elders whose hair has uncurled ;
And young, but with fancies as hoary
And grey as the world.

I have passed from the outermost portal
To the shrine where a sin is a prayer ;
What care though the service be mortal ?
O our lady of Torture, what care ?
All thine the last wine that I pour is,
The last in the chalice we drain,
O fierce and luxurious Dolores,
Our Lady of Pain.

All thine the new wine of desire,
The fruit of four lips as they clung
Till the hair and the eyelids took fire,
The foam of a serpentine tongue,
The froth of the serpents of pleasure,
More salt than the foam of the sea,
Now felt as a flame, now at leisure
As wine shed for me.

Ah thy people, thy children, thy chosen,
Marked cross from the womb and per-
verse !
They have found out the secret to cozen
The gods that constrain us and curse ;
They alone, they are wise, and none other ;
Give me place, even me, in their train,
O my sister, my spouse, and my mother,
Our Lady of Pain.

For the crown of our life as it closes
Is darkness, the fruit thereof dust ;
No thorns go as deep as a rose's,

And love is more cruel than lust.
Time turns the old days to derision,
Our loves into corpses or wives;
And marriage and death and division
Make barren our lives.

And pale from the past we draw nigh thee
And satiate with comfortless hours;
And we know thee, how all men belie thee,
And we gather the fruit of thy flowers;
The passion that slays and recovers,
The pangs and the kisses that rain
On the lips and the limbs of thy lovers,
Our Lady of Pain.

The desire of thy furious embraces
Is more than the wisdom of years,
On the blossom though blood lie in traces,
Though the foliage be sodden with tears.
For the lords in whose keeping the door is
That opens on all who draw breath
Gave the cypress to love, my Dolores,
The myrtle to death.

And they laughed, changing hands in the
measure,

And they mixed and made peace after
strife;

Pain melted in tears, and was pleasure;
Death tingled with blood, and was life.

Like lovers they melted and tingled,
In the dusk of thine innermost fame;
In the darkness they murmured and mingled,
Our Lady of Pain.

In a twilight where virtues are vices,
In thy chapels, unknown of the sun,
To a tune that enthralls and entices,
They were wed, and the train were as one.

For the tune from thine altar hath sounded
Since God bade the world's work begin,
And the fume of thine incense abounded,
To sweeten the sin.

Love listens, and paler than ashes,
Through his curls as the crown on them
slips,

Lifts languid wet eyelids and lashes,
And laughs with insatiable lips.

Thou shalt hush him with heavy caresses,
With music that scares the profane;
Thou shalt darken his eyes with thy tresses,
Our Lady of Pain.

Thou shalt blind his bright eyes though he
wrestle,

Thou shalt chain his light limbs though
he strive;

In his lips all thy serpents shall nestle,
In his hands all thy cruelties thrive.
In the daytime thy voice shall go through
him,

In his dreams he shall feel thee and ache;
Thou shalt kindle by night and subdue him
Asleep and awake.

Thou shalt touch and make redder his roses
With juice not of fruit nor of bud;
When the sense in the spirit reposes,
Thou shalt quicken the soul through the
blood.

Thine, thine the one grace we implore is,
Who would live and not languish or feign,
O sleepless and deadly Dolores,
Our Lady of Pain.

Dost thou dream, in a respite of slumber,
In a lull of the fires of thy life,
Of the days without name, without number,
When thy will stung the world into strife,
When, a goddess, the pulse of thy passion
Smote kings as they revelled in Rome;
And they hailed thee re-risen, O Thalassian,
Foam-white, from the foam?

When thy lips had such lovers to flatter,
When the city lay red from thy rods,
And thine hands were as arrows to scatter
The children of change and their gods;
When the blood of thy foemen made fervent
A sand never moist from the main,
As one smote them, their lord and thy
servant,
Our Lady of Pain.

On sands by the storm never shaken,
Nor wet from the washing of tides;
Nor by foam of the waves overtaken,
Nor winds that the thunder bestrides;
But red from the print of thy paces,
Made smooth for the world and its lords,
Ringed round with a flame of fair faces,
And splendid with swords.

There the gladiator, pale for thy pleasure,
Drew bitter and perilous breath;
There torments laid hold on the treasure
Of limbs too delicious for death;
When thy gardens were lit with live torches;

When the world was a steed for thy rein;
When the nations lay prone in thy porches,
Our Lady of Pain.

When, with flame all around him aspirant,
Stood flushed, as a harp-player stands,
The implacable beautiful tyrant,
Rose-crowned, having death in his hands;
And a sound as the sound of loud water
Smote far through the flight of the fires,
And mixed with the lightning of slaughter
A thunder of lyres.

Dost thou dream of what was and no more
is,
The old kingdoms of earth and the
kings?

Dost thou hunger for these things, Dolores,
For these, in a world of new things?
But thy bosom no fasts could emaciate,
No hunger compel to complain
Those lips that no bloodshed could satiate,
Our Lady of Pain.

As of old when the world's heart was
lighter,
Through thy garments the grace of thee
glows,

The white wealth of thy body made whiter
By the blushes of amorous blows,
And seamed with sharp lips and fierce fin-
gers,
And branded by kisses that bruise;
When all shall be gone that now lingers,
Ah, what shall we lose?

Thou wert fair in the fearless old fashion,
And thy limbs are as melodies yet,
And move to the music of passion
With lithe and lascivious regret,
What ailed us, O gods, to desert you
For creeds that refuse and restrain?
Come down and redeem us from virtue,
Our Lady of Pain.

All shrines that were Vestal are flameless;
But the flame has not fallen from this,
Though obscure be the god, and though
nameless

The eyes and the hair that we kiss;
Low fires that love sits by and forges
Fresh heads for his arrows and thine;
Hair loosened and soiled in mid orgies
With kisses and wine.

Thy skin changes country and color,
And shrivels or swells to a snake's.
Let it brighten and bloat and grow duller,
We know it, the flames and the flakes,
Red brands on it smitten and bitten,
Round skies where a star is a stain,
And the leaves with thy litanies written,
Our Lady of Pain.

On thy bosom though many a kiss be,
There are none such as knew it of old.
Was it Alciphron once or Arisbe,
Male ringlets or feminine gold
That thy lips met with under the statue,
Whence a look shot out sharp after
thieves
From the eyes of the garden god at you
Across the fig-leaves?

Then still, through dry seasons, and mois-
ter,
One god had a wreath to his shrine;
The love was the pearl of his oyster,*
And Venus rose red out of wine.
We have all done amiss, choosing rather
Such loves as the wise gods disdain;
Intercede for us thou with thy father,
Our Lady of Pain.

In spring he had crowns of his garden,
Red corn in the heat of the year,
Then hoary green olives that harden
When the grape-blossom freezes with fear;
And milk-budded myrtles with Venus
And vine-leaves with Bacchus he trod;
And ye said, "We have seen, he hath seen
us,
A visible God."

What broke off the garlands that girt you?
What sundered you spirit and clay?
Weak sins yet alive are as virtue
To the strength of the sins of that day.
For dried is the blood of thy lover,
Ipsithilla, contracted the vein;
Cry aloud, "Will he rise and recover,
Our Lady of Pain?"

Cry aloud; for the old world is broken:
Cry out; for the Phrygian is priest,
And rears not the bountiful token
And spreads not the fatherly feast.

* "Nam te præcipue in suis urbibus colit ora
Hellasponia, cæteris ostensor oris."
CATULL. *Carm.* xviii.

From the midmost of Ida, from shady
 Recesses that murmur at morn,
 They have brought and baptized her, Our
 Lady,
 A goddess new-born.

And the chaplets of old are above us,
 And the oyster-bed teems out of reach;
 Old poets outsing and outlove us,
 And Catullus makes mouths at our speech.
 Who shall kiss, in thy father's own city,
 With such lips as he sang with, again?
 Intercede for us all of thy pity,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Out of Dindymus heavily laden
 Her lions draw bound and unfed
 A mother, a mortal, a maiden,
 A queen over death and the dead.
 She is cold, and her habit is lowly,
 Her temple of branches and sods;
 Most fruitful and virginal, holy,
 A mother of gods.

She hath wasted with fire thine high places,
 She hath hidden and marred and made
 sad

The fair limbs of the Loves, the fair faces
 Of gods that were goodly and glad.
 She slays, and her hands are not bloody;
 She moves as a moon in the wane,
 White-robed, and thy raiment is ruddy,
 Our Lady of Pain.

They shall pass and their places be taken,
 The gods and the priests that are pure.
 They shall pass, and shalt thou not be
 shaken?

They shall perish, and shalt thou endure?
 Death laughs, breathing close and relentless
 In the nostrils and eyelids of lust,
 With a pinch in his fingers of scentless
 And delicate dust.

But the worm shall revive thee with kisses,
 Thou shalt change and transmute as a
 god,

As the rod to a serpent that hisses,
 As the serpent again to a rod.
 Thy life shall not cease though thou dost it;
 Thou shalt live until evil be slain,
 And good shall die first, said thy prophet,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Did he lie? did he laugh? does he know it,
 Now he lies out of reach, out of breath,
 Thy prophet, thy preacher, thy poet,
 Sin's child by incestuous Death?
 Did he find out in fire at his waking,
 Or discern as his eyelids lost light,
 When the bands of the body were breaking
 And all came in sight?

Who has known all the evil before us,
 Or the tyrannous secrets of time?
 Though we match not the dead men that
 bore us
 At a song, at a kiss, at a crime—
 Though the heathen outface and outlive us,
 And our lives and our longings are twain—
 Ah, forgive us our virtues, forgive us,
 Our Lady of Pain.

Who are we that embalm and embrace thee
 With spices and savors of song?
 What is time, that his children should face
 thee;
 What am I, that my lips do thee wrong?
 I could hurt thee—but pain would delight
 thee;
 Or caress thee—but love would repel;
 And the lovers whose lips would excite thee
 Are serpents in hell.

Who now shall content thee as they did,
 Thy lovers, when temples were built
 And the hair of the sacrifice braided
 And the blood of the sacrifice spilt,
 In Lampsacus fervent with faces,
 In Aphaca red from thy reign,
 Who embraced thee with awful embraces,
 Our Lady of Pain?

Where are they, Cotytto or Venus,
 Astarte or Ashtaroth, where?
 Do their hands as we touch come between
 us?
 Is the breath of them hot in thy hair?
 From their lips have thy lips taken fever,
 With the blood of their bodies grown red?
 Hast thou left upon earth a believer
 If these men are dead?

They were purple of raiment and golden,
 Filled full of thee, fiery with wine,
 Thy lovers, in haunts unbecomely,
 In marvellous chambers of thine.
 They are fled, and their footprints escape
 us,

Who appraise thee, adore, and abstain,
O daughter of Death and Priapus,
Our Lady of Pain.

What ails us to fear overmeasure,
To praise thee with timorous breath,
O mistress and mother of pleasure,
The one thing as certain as death?
We shall change as the things that we
cherish,
Shall fade as they faded before,

As foam upon water shall perish
As sand upon shore

We shall know what the darkness discovers,
If the grave-pit be shallow or deep;
And our fathers of old, and our lovers,
We shall know if they sleep not or sleep
We shall see whether hell be not heaven,
Find out whether tares be not grain,
And the joys of thee seventy times seven,
Our Lady of Pain.

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE.

HERE, where the world is quiet,
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labor,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,

But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes,
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love repose,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;

Her languid lips are sweeter
 Than love's who fears to greet her
 To men that mix and meet her
 From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
 She waits for all men born;
 Forgets the earth her mother,
 The life of fruits and corn;
 And sprung and seed and swallow
 Take wing for her and follow
 Where summer song rings hollow
 And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
 The old loves with wearier wings;
 And all dead years draw thither,
 And all disastrous things;
 Dead dreams of days forsaken
 Blind buds that snows have shaken,
 Wild leaves that winds have taken,
 Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
 And joy was never sure;

To-day will die to-morrow;
 Time stoops to no man's lure;
 And love, grown faint and fretful
 With lips but half regretful
 Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
 Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
 From hope and fear set free,
 We thank with brief thanksgiving
 Whatever gods may be
 That no life lives for ever;
 That dead men rise up never;
 That even the weariest river
 Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
 Nor any change of light:
 Nor sound of waters shaken,
 Nor any sound or sight:
 Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
 Nor days nor things diurnal;
 Only the sleep eternal
 In an eternal night.

HESPERIA.

Out of the golden remote wild west where
 the sea without shore is,
 Full of the sunset, and sad, if at all, with
 the fulness of joy,
 As a wind sets in with the autumn that
 blows from the region of stories,
 Blows with a perfume of songs and of
 memories beloved from a boy,
 Blows from the capes of the past oversea to
 the bays of the present,
 Filled as with shadow of sound with the
 pulse of invisible feet,
 Far out to the shallows and straits of the
 future, by rough ways or pleasant,

Is it thither the wind's wings beat? is it
 hither to me, O my sweet?
 For thee, in the stream of the deep tide-
 wind blowing in with the water,
 Thee I behold as a bird borne in with the
 wind from the west,
 Straight from the sunset, across white waves
 whence rose as a daughter
 Venus thy mother, in years when the
 world was a water at rest.
 Out of the distance of dreams, as a dream
 that abides after slumber,
 Strayed from the fugitive flock of the
 night, when the moon overhead

Wanes in the wan waste heights of the
 heaven, and stars without number
 Die without sound, and are spent like
 lamps that are burnt by the dead,
 Comes back to me, stays by me, lulls me
 with touch of forgotten caresses,
 One warm dream clad about with a fire
 as of life that endures;
 The delight of thy face, and the sound of
 thy feet, and the wind of thy tresses,
 And all of a man that regrets, and all of
 a maid that allures.
 But thy bosom is warm for my face and
 profound as a manifold flower,
 Thy silence as music, thy voice as an
 odor that fades in a flame;
 Not a dream, not a dream is the kiss of thy
 mouth, and the bountiful hour
 That makes me forget what was sin, and
 would make me forget were it shame.
 Thine eyes that are quiet, thine hands that
 are tender, thy lips that are loving,
 Comfort and cool me as dew in the dawn
 of a moon like a dream;
 And my heart yearns baffled and blind,
 moved vainly toward thee, and mov-
 ing
 As the reflux seaweed moves in the
 languid exuberant stream,
 Fair as a rose is on earth, as a rose under
 water in prison,
 That stretches and swings to the slow
 passionate pulse of the sea,
 Closed up from the air and the sun, but
 alive, as a ghost re-arisen,
 Pale as the love that revives as a ghost
 re-arisen in me.
 From the bountiful infinite west, from the
 happy memorial places
 Full of the stately repose and the lordly
 delight of the dead,
 Where the fortunate islands are lit with the
 light of ineffable faces,
 And the sound of a sea without wind is
 about them, and sunset is red,
 Come back to redeem and release me from
 love that recalls and represses,
 That cleaves to my flesh as a flame, till
 the serpent has eaten his fill;
 From the bitter delights of the dark, and
 the feverish, the furtive caresses
 That murder the youth in a man or ever
 his heart have its will.

Thy lips cannot laugh and thine eyes can-
 not weep; thou art pale as a rose is,
 Paler and sweeter than leaves that cover
 the blush of the bud;
 And the heart of the flower is compassion,
 and pity the core it encloses,
 Pity, not love, that is born of the breath
 and decays with the blood.
 As the cross that a wild nun clasps till the
 edge of it bruises her bosom,
 So love wounds as we grasp it, and
 blackens and burns as a flame;
 I have loved overmuch in my life: when the
 live bud bursts with the blossom,
 Bitter as ashes or tears is the fruit, and
 the wine thereof shame.
 As a heart that its anguish divides is the
 green bud cloven asunder;
 As the blood of a man self-slain is the
 flush of the leaves that allure;
 And the perfume as poison and wine to
 the brain, a delight and a wonder;
 And the thorns are too sharp for a boy;
 too slight for a man, to endure.
 Too soon did I love it, and lost love's rose;
 and I cared not for glory's:
 Only the blossoms of sleep and of plea-
 sure were mixed in my hair.
 Was it myrtle or poppy thy garland was
 woven with, O my Dolores?
 Was it pallor or slumber, or blush as of
 blood, that I found in thee fair?
 For desire is a respite from love, and the
 flesh not the heart is her fuel;
 She was sweet to me once, who am fled
 and escaped from the rage of her
 reign;
 Who behold as of old time at hand as I
 turn, with her mouth growing cruel,
 And flushed as with wine with the blood
 of her lovers,
 Our Lady of Pain.
 Low down where the thicket is thicker with
 thorns than with leaves in the sum-
 mer,
 In the brake is a gleaming of eyes and a
 hissing of tongues that I knew;
 And the lithe long throats of her snakes
 reach round her, their mouths over-
 come her,
 And her lips grow cool with their foam,
 made moist as a desert with dew.
 With the thirst and the hunger of lust
 though her beautiful lips be so bitter

With the cold foul foam of the snakes
 they soften and redden and smile;
 And her fierce mouth sweetens, her eyes
 wax wide and her eyelashes glitter,
 And she laughs with a savor of blood in
 her face, and a savor of guile.
 She laughs, and her hands reach hither, her
 hair blows hither and hisses,
 As a low-lit flame in a wind, back-blown
 till it shudder and leap;
 Let her lips not again lay hold on my soul,
 nor her poisonous kisses,
 To consume it alive and divide from thy
 bosom, Our Lady of Sleep.
 Ah daughter of sunset and slumber, if now
 it return into prison,
 Who shall redeem it anew? but we, if
 thou wilt, let us fly;
 Let us take to us, now that the white skies
 thrill with a moon unarisen,
 Swift horses of fear or of love, take flight
 and depart and not die.
 They are swifter than dreams, they are
 stronger than death; there is none
 that hath ridden,
 None that shall ride in the dim strange
 ways of his life as we ride:

By the meadows of memory, the highlands
 of hope, and the shore that is hidden,
 Where life breaks loud and unseen, a
 sonorous invisible tide;
 By the sands where sorrow has trodden,
 the salt pools bitter and sterile,
 By the thundering reef and the low sea-
 wall and the channel of years,
 Our wild steeds press on the night, strain
 hard through pleasure and peril,
 Labor and listen and pant not or pause
 for the peril that nears;
 And the sound of them trampling the way
 cleaves night as an arrow asunder,
 And slow by the sand-hill and swift by
 the down with its glimpses of grass
 Sudden and steady the music, as eight hoofs
 trample and thunder,
 Rings in the ear of the low blind wind of
 the night as we pass;
 Shrill shrieks in our faces the blind bland
 air that was mute as a maiden,
 Stung into storm by the speed of our
 passage, and deaf where we past;
 And our spirits too burn as we bound, thine
 holy but mine heavy-laden,
 As we burn with the fire of our flight; ah,
 love, shall we win at the last?

LOVE AT SEA.

We are in love's land to-day;
 Where shall we go?
 Love, shall we start or stay,
 Or sail or row?
 There's many a wind and way,
 And never a May but May;
 We are in love's hand to-day;
 Where shall we go?

Our landwind is the breath
 Of sorrows kissed to death
 And joys that were;

Our ballast is a rose;
 Our way lies where God knows
 And love knows where.
 We are in love's hand to-day—

Our seamen are fledged Loves,
 Our masts are bills of doves,
 Our decks fine gold;
 Our ropes are dead maids' hair,
 Our stores are love-shafts fair
 And manifold.

We are in love's land to-day—

Where shall we land you, sweet?
 On fields of strange men's feet,
 Or fields near home?
 Or where the fire-flowers blow,
 Or where the flowers of snow
 Or flowers of foam?
 We are in love's hand to-day—

Land me, she says, where love
 Shows but one shaft, one dove,
 One heart, one hand,
 —A shore like that, my dear,
 Lies where no man will steer,
 No maiden land.
 Imitated from Theophile Gautier

APRIL

FROM THE FRENCH OF THE VIDAME DE CHARTRES.

12—?

WHEN the fields catch flower
 And the underwood is green,
 And from bower unto bower
 The songs of the birds begin,
 I sing with sighing between.
 When I laugh and sing,
 I am heavy at heart for my sin;
 I am sad in the spring
 For my love that I shall not win,
 For a foolish thing.

This profit I have of my woe,
 That I know, as I sing,
 I know he will needs have it so
 Who is master and king,
 Who is lord of the spirit of spring.
 I will serve her and will not spare
 Till her pity awake
 Who is good, who is pure, who is fair,
 Even her for whose sake
 Love hath ta'en me and slain unaware.

O my Lord, O Love,
 I have laid my life at thy feet;
 Have thy will thereof,
 Do as it please thee with it,
 For what shall please thee is sweet.
 I am come unto thee
 To do thee service, O Love;

Yet cannot I see
 Thou wilt take any pity thereof,
 Any mercy on me.

But the grace I have long time sought
 Comes never in sight,
 If in her it abideth not,
 Through thy mercy and might,
 Whose heart is the world's delight.
 Thou hast sworn without fail I shall die,
 For my heart is set
 On what hurts me, I wot not why,
 But cannot forget
 What I love, what I sing for and sigh.

She is worthy of praise,
 For this grief of her giving is worth
 All the joy of my days
 That lie between death's day and birth
 All the lordship of things upon earth.
 Nay, what have I said?
 I would not be glad if I could;
 My dream and my dread
 Are of her, and for her sake I would
 That my life were fled.

Lo, sweet, if I durst not pray to you,
 Then were I dead;
 If I sang not a little to say to you,
 (Could it be said)
 O my love, how my heart would be fed;

Ah sweet who hast hold of my heart
 For thy love's sake I live,
 Do but tell me, ere either depart,
 What a lover may give

For a woman so fair as thou art.
 The lovers that disbelieve,
 False rumors shall grieve
 And evil-speaking shall part.

BEFORE PARTING.

A MONTH or twain to live on honeycomb
 Is pleasant; but one tires of scented time,
 Cold sweet recurrence of accepted rhyme,
 And that strong purple under juice and
 foam
 Where the wine's heart has burst;
 Nor feel the latter kisses like the first.

Once yet, this poor one time; I will not
 pray
 Even to change the bitterness of it,
 The bitter taste ensuing on the sweet,
 To make your tears fall where your soft hair
 lay
 All blurred and heavy in some perfumed
 wise
 Over my face and eyes.

And yet who knows what end the scythed
 wheat
 Makes of its foolish poppies' mouths of
 red?
 These were not sown, these are not har-
 vested,
 They grow a month and are cast under feet
 And none has care thereof,
 As none has care of a divided love.

I know each shadow of your lips by rote,
 Each change of love in eyelids and eye-
 brows;
 The fashion of fair temples tremulous
 With tender blood, and color of your throat;
 I know not how love is gone out of this,
 Seeing that all was his.

Love's likeness there endures upon all
 these:
 But out of these one shall not gather love.
 Day hath not strength nor the night shade
 enough
 To make love whole and fill his lips with
 ease,
 As some bee-built cell
 Feels at filled lips the heavy honey swell.

I know not how this last month leaves your
 hair
 Less full of purple color and hid spice,
 And that luxurious trouble of closed eyes
 Is mixed with meaner shadow and waste
 care;
 And love, kissed out by pleasure, seems not
 yet
 Worth patience to regret.

THE SUNDEW.

A LITTLE marsh-plant, yellow green,
And pricked at lip with tender red.
Tread close, and either way you tread
Some faint black water jets between
Lest you should bruise the curious head.

A live thing may be; who shall know?
The summer knows and suffers it;
For the cool moss is thick and sweet
Each side, and saves the blossom so
That it lives out the long June heat.

The deep scent of the heather burns
About it; breathless though it be,
Bow down and worship; more than we,
Is the least flower whose life returns,
Least weed renascent in the sea.

We are vexed and cumbered in earth's sight
With wants, with many memories;
These see their mother what she is,
Glad-growing, till August leave more bright
The apple-colored cranberries.

Wind blows and bleaches the strong grass,
Blown all one way to shelter it
From trample of strayed kine, with feet

Felt heavier than the moorhen was,
Strayed up past patches of wild wheat

You call it sundew: how it grows,
If with its color it have breath,
If life taste sweet to it, if death
Pain its soft petal, no man knows:
Man has no sight or sense that saith.

My sundew, grown of gentle days,
In these green mules the spring begun
Thy growth ere April had half done
With the soft secret of her ways
Or June made ready for the sun.

O red-lipped mouth of marsh-flower,
I have a secret halved with thee.
The name that is love's name to me
Thou knowest, and the face of her
Who is my festival to see.

The hard sun, as thy petals knew,
Colored the heavy moss-water:
Thou wert not worth green midsummer
Nor fit to live to August blue,
O sundew, not remembering her.

F É L I S E.

Mais où sont les neiges d'autan.

WHAT shall be said between us here,
Among the downs, between the trees,
In fields that knew our feet last year,
In sight of quiet sands and seas,
This year, *Félicé*?

Who knows what word were best to say?
For last year's leaves lie dead and red
On this sweet day, in this green May,

E

And barren corn makes bitter bread.
What shall be said?

Here as last year the fields begin,
A fire of flowers and glowing grass;
The old fields we laughed and lingered in,
Seeing each our souls in last year's glass,
Félicé, alas!

Shall we not laugh, shall we not weep,
 Not we, though this be as it is?
 For love awake or love asleep
 Ends in a laugh, a dream, a kiss,
 A song like this.

I that have slept awake, and you
 Sleep, who last year were well awake.
 Though love do all that love can do,
 My heart will never ache or break
 For your heart's sake.

The great sea, faultless as a flower,
 Throbs, trembling under beam and
 breeze,
 And laughs with love of the amorous hour.
 I found you fairer once, Félise,
 Than flowers on seas.

We played at bondsman and at queen;
 But as the days change men change too;
 I find the grey sea's notes of green,
 The green sea's fervent flakes of blue,
 More fair than you.

Your beauty is not over fair
 Now in mine eyes, who am grown up
 wise.
 The smell of flowers in all your hair
 Allures not now; no sigh replies
 If your heart sighs.

But you sigh seldom, you sleep sound,
 You find love's new name good enough.
 Less sweet I find it than I found
 The sweetest name that ever love
 Grew weary of.

My snake with bright bland eyes, my snake
 Grown tame and glad to be caressed.
 With lips athirst for mine to slake
 Their tender fever! who had guessed
 You loved me best?

I had died for this last year, to know
 You loved me. Who shall turn on fate?
 I care not if love come or go
 Now, though your love seek mine for
 mate.
 It is too late.

The dust of many strange desires
 Lies deep between us; in our eyes
 Dead smoke of perishable fires
 Flickers, a fume in air and skies,
 A steam of sighs.

You loved me and you loved me not;
 A little, much, and overmuch.
 Will you forget as I forgot?
 Let all dead things lie dead; none such
 Are soft to touch.

I love you and I do not love,
 Too much, a little, not at all;
 Too much, and never yet enough.
 Birds quick to fledge and fly at call
 Are quick to fall.

And these love longer now than men,
 And larger loves than ours are these.
 No diver brings up love again
 Dropped once, my beautiful Félise,
 In such cold seas.

Gone deeper than all plummets sound,
 Where in the dim green dayless day
 The life of such dead thing lies, bound
 As the sea feeds on, wreck and stray
 And castaway.

Can I forget? yea, that can I,
 And that can all men; so will you,
 Alive, or later, when you die,
 Ah, but the love you plead was true?
 Was mine not too?

I loved you for that name of yours
 Long ere we met, and long enough.
 Now that one thing of all endures—
 The sweetest name that ever love
 Waxed weary of.

Like colors in the sea, like flowers,
 Like a cat's splendid circled eyes
 That wax and wane with love for hours,
 Green as green flame, blue-grey like skies,
 And soft like sighs—

And all these only like your name,
 And your name full of all of these.
 I say it, and it sounds the same—
 Save that I say it now at ease,
 Your name, Félise.

I said "she must be swift and white
 And subtly warm, and half perverse
 And sweet like sharp soft fruit to bite,
 And like a snake's love lithe and fierce."
 Men have guessed worse..

What was the song I made of you
 Here where the grass forgets our feet
 As afternoon forgets the dew?
 Ah that such sweet things should be fleet,
 Such fleet things sweet!

As afternoon forgets the dew,
 As time in time forgets all men,
 As our old place forgets us two,
 Who might have turned to one thing
 then,
 But not again.

O lips that mine have grown into
 Like April's kissing May,
 O fervent eyelids letting through
 Those eyes the greenest of things blue,
 The bluest of things grey,

If you were I and I were you,
 How could I love you, say?
 How could the roseleaf love the rue,
 The day love nightfall and her dew,
 Though night may love the day?

You loved it may be more than I;
 We know not; love is hard to seize,
 And all things are not good to try;
 And lifelong loves the worst of these
 For us, *Félice*.

Ah, take the season and have done,
 Love well the hour and let it go:
 Two souls may sleep and wake up one,
 Or dream they wake and find it so,
 And then—you know.

Kiss me once hard as though a flame
 Lay on my lips and made them fire;
 The same lips now, and not the same;
 What breath shall fill and re-inspire
 A dead desire?

The old song sounds hollower in mine ear
 Than thin keen sounds of dead men's
 speech—
 A noise one hears and would not hear;
 Too strong to die, too weak to reach
 From wave to beach.

We stand on either side the sea,
 Stretch hands, blow kisses, laugh and
 lean
 I toward you, you toward me;
 But what hears either save the keen
 Grey sea between?

A year divides us, love from love,
 Though you loved now, though I loved
 then.

The gulf is strait, but deep enough;
 Who shall recross, who among men
 Shall cross again?

Love was a jest last year, you said,
 And what lives surely, surely dies.
 Even so; but now that love is dead,
 Shall love rekindle from wet eyes,
 From subtle sighs?

For many loves are good to see;
 Mutable loves, and loves perverse;
 But there is nothing, nor shall be,
 So sweet, so wicked, but my verse
 Can dream of worse.

For we that sing and you that love
 Know that which man may, only we.
 The rest live under us; above,
 Live the great gods in heaven, and see
 What things shall be.

So this thing is and must be so;
 For man dies, and love also dies.
 Though yet love's ghost moves to and fro
 The sea-green mirrors of your eyes,
 And laughs, and lies.

Eyes colored like a water-flower,
 And deeper than the green sea's glass;
 Eyes that remember one sweet hour—
 In vain we swore it should not pass;
 In vain, alas!

Ah my *Félice*, if love or sin,
 If shame or fear could hold it fast,
 Should we not hold it? Love wears thin,
 And they laugh well who laugh the last.
 Is it not past?

The gods, the gods are stronger; time
 Falls down before them, all men's knees
 Bow, all men's prayers and sorrows climb
 Like incense towards them; yea, for
 these
 Are gods, *Félice*.

Immortal are they, clothed with powers,
 Not to be comforted at all;
 Lords over all the fruitless hours;
 Too great to appease, too high to appal,
 Too far to call.

For none shall move the most high gods,
 Who are most sad, being cruel; none
 Shall break or take away the rods
 Wherewith they scourge us, not as one
 That smites a son.

By many a name of many a creed
 We have called upon them, since the
 sands
 Fell through time's hour-glass first, a seed
 Of life; and out of many lands
 Have we stretched hands.

When have they heard us? who hath
 known
 Their faces, climbed unto their feet,
 Felt them and found them? Laugh or
 groan,
 Doth heaven remurmur and repeat
 Sad sounds or sweet?

Do the stars answer? in the night
 Have ye found comfort? or by day
 Have ye seen gods? What hope, what light,
 Falls from the farthest starriest way
 On you that pray?

Are the skies wet because we weep,
 Or fair because of any mirth?
 Cry out; they are gods; perchance they
 sleep;
 Cry; thou shalt know what prayers are
 worth,
 Thou dust and earth.

O earth, thou art fair; O dust, thou art
 great.
 O laughing lips and lips that mourn,
 Pray, till ye feel the exceeding weight
 Of God's intolerable scorn,
 Not to be borne.

Behold, there is no grief like this;
 The barren blossom of thy prayer,
 Thou shalt find out how sweet it is.
 O fools and blind, what seek ye there,
 High up in the air?

Ye must have gods, the friends of men,
 Merciful gods, compassionate,
 And these shall answer you again.
 Will ye beat always at the gate,
 Ye fools of fate?

Ye fools and blind; for this is sure,
 That all ye shall not live, but die.
 Lo, what thing have ye found endure?
 Or what thing have ye found on
 high
 Past the blind sky?

The ghosts of words and dusty dreams,
 Old memories, faiths infirm and dead.
 Ye fools; for which among you deems
 His prayer can alter green to red
 Or stones to bread?

Why should ye bear with hopes and fears
 Till all these things be drawn in one,
 The sound of iron-footed years,
 And all the oppression that is done
 Under the sun?

Ye might end surely, surely pass
 Out of the multitude of things,
 Under the dust, beneath the grass,
 Deep in dim death, where no thought
 stings,
 No record clings.

No memory more of love or hate,
 No trouble, nothing that aspires,
 No sleepless labor thwarting fate,
 And thwarted; where no travail tires,
 Where no faith fires.

All passes, nought that has been is,
 Things good and evil have one end.
 Can anything be otherwise
 Though all men swear all things would
 mend
 With God to friend?

Can ye beat off one wave with prayer,
 Can ye move mountains? bid the flower
 Take flight and turn to a bird in the air?
 Can ye hold fast for shine or shower
 One wingless hour?

Ah sweet, and we too, can we bring
 One sigh back, bid one smile revive?
 Can God restore one ruined thing,
 Or he who slays our souls alive
 Make dead things thrive?

Two gifts perforce he has given us yet,
Though sad things stay and glad things
fly;

Two gifts he has given us, to forget
All glad and sad things that go by,
And then to die.

We know not whether death be good,
But life at least it will not be :
Men will stand saddening as we stood,
Watch the same fields and skies as we
And the same sea.

Let this be said between us here,
One love grows green when one turns
grey;

This year knows nothing of last year;
To-morrow has no more to say
To yesterday.

Live and let live, as I will do,
Love and let love, and so will I.
But, sweet, for me no more with you :
Not while I live, not though I die.
Good-night, good-bye.

AN INTERLUDE.

In the greenest growth of the Maytime,
I rode where the woods were wet,
Between the dawn and the daytime;
The spring was glad that we met.

There was something the season wanted,
Though the ways and the woods smelt
sweet;
The breath at your lips that panted,
The pulse of the grass at your feet.

You came, and the sun came after,
And the green grew golden above;
And the flag-flowers lightened with laugh-
ter,
And the meadow sweet shook with love.

Your feet in the full-grown grasses
Moved soft as a weak wind blows;
You passed me as April passes,
With face made out of a rose.

By the stream where the stems were slender,
Your bright foot paused at the sedge;
It might be to watch the tender
Light leaves in the springtime hedge.

On boughs that the sweet month blanches,
With flowery frost of May :
It might be a bird in the branches,
It might be a thorn in the way.

I wanted to watch you linger
With foot drawn back from the dew,
Till a sunbeam straight like a finger
Struck sharp through the leaves at you

And a bird overhead sang *Follow*,
And a bird to the right sang *Here*;
And the arch of the leaves was hollow,
And the meaning of May was clear.

I saw where the sun's hand pointed,
I knew what the bird's note said;
By the dawn and the dewfall anointed,
You were queen by the gold on your head.

As the glimpse of a burnt-out ember
Recalls a regret of the sun,
I remember, forget, and remember
What Love saw done and undone.

I remember the way we parted,
The day and the way we met;
You hoped we were both broken-hearted,
And knew we should both forget.

And May with her world in flower
Seemed still to murmur and smile
As you murmured and smiled for an hour;
I saw you turn at the stile.

A hand like a white wood-blossom
 You lifted, and waved, and passed,
 With head hung down to the bosom,
 And pale, as it seemed, at last.

And the best and the worst of this is
 That neither is most to blame
 If you've forgotten my kisses
 And I've forgotten your name.

HENDECASYLLABICS.

In the month of the long decline of roses
 I, beholding the summer dead before me,
 Set my face to the sea and journeyed silent,
 Gazing eagerly where above the sea-mark
 Flame as fierce as the fervid eyes of lions
 Half divided the eyelids of the sunset;
 Till I heard as it were a noise of waters
 Moving tremulous under feet of angels
 Multitudinous, out of all the heavens;
 Knew the fluttering wind, the fluttered
 foliage,
 Shaken fitfully, full of sound and shadow;
 And saw, trodden upon by noiseless angels,
 Long mysterious reaches fed with moon-
 light,
 Sweet sad straits in a soft subsiding
 channel,
 Blown about by the lips of winds I knew
 not,
 Winds not born in the north nor any
 quarter,
 Winds not warm with the south nor any
 sunshine;
 Heard between them a voice of exultation,
 "Lo, the summer is dead, the sun is faded,
 Even like as a leaf the year is withered,

All the fruits of the day from all her
 branches
 Gathered, neither is any left to gather.
 All the flowers are dead, the tender blos-
 soms,
 All are taken away; the season wasted,
 Like an ember among the fallen ashes.
 Now with light of the winter days, with
 moonlight,
 Light of snow, and the bitter light of hoar-
 frost,
 We bring flowers that fade not after autumn,
 Pale white chaplets and crowns of latter
 seasons.
 Fair false leaves (but the summer leaves
 were false.)
 Woven under the eyes of stars and planets
 When low light was upon the windy reaches
 Where the flower of foam was blown, a lily
 Dropt among the sonorous fruitless furrows
 And green fields of the sea that make no
 pasture:
 Since the winter begins, the weeping winter,
 All whose flowers are tears, and round his
 temples
 Iron blossom of frost is bound for ever."

SAPPHICS.

ALL the night sleep came not upon my eye-
 lids,
 Shed not dew, nor shook nor unclosed a
 feather,
 Yet with lips shut close and with eyes of
 iron
 Stood and beheld me.

Then to me so lying awake a vision
 Came without sleep over the seas and
 touched me,
 Softly touched mine eyelids and lips; and I
 too,
 Full of the vision,

Saw the white implacable Aphrodite,
Saw the hair unbound, and the feet un-
sandalled
Shine as fire of sunset on western waters;
Saw the reluctant

Feet, the straining plumes of the doves
that drew her,
Looking always, looking with necks re-
verted,
Back to Lesbos, back to the hills where-
under
Shone Mitylene;

Heard the flying feet of the Loves behind
her
Make a sudden thunder upon the waters,
As the thunder flung from the strong un-
closing
Wings of a great wind.

So the goddess fled from her place, with
awful
Sound of feet and thunder of wings around
her;
While behind a clamour of singing women
Severed the twilight.

Ah the singing, ah the delight, the passion!
All the Loves wept, listening; sick with
anguish,
Stood the crowned nine Muses about Apollo;
Fear was upon them,

While the tenth sang wonderful things they
knew not.
Ah the tenth, the Lesbian! the nine were
silent,
None endured the sound of her song for
weeping;
Laurel by laurel,

Faded all their crowns; but about her fore-
head,
Round her woven tresses and ashen temples
White as dead snow, paler than grass in
summer,
Ravaged with kisses,

Shone a light of fire as a crown for ever.
Yea, almost the implacable Aphrodite
Paused, and almost wept; such a song was
that song,
Yea, by her name too

Called her, saying, "Turn to me, O my
Sappho;"
Yet she turned her face from the Loves, she
saw not
Tears or laughter darken immortal eyelids,
Heard not about her

Fearful fitful wings of the doves departing,
Saw not how the bosom of Aphrodite
Shook with weeping, saw not her shaken
raiment,
Saw not her hands wrung;

Saw the Lesbians kissing across their
smitten
Lutes with lips more sweet than the sound
of lute-strings,
Mouth to mouth and hand upon hand, her
chosen,
Fairer than all men;

Only saw the beautiful lips and fingers,
Full of songs and kisses and little whispers,
Full of music; only beheld among them
Soar, as a bird soars

Newly fledged, her visible song, a marvel,
Made of perfect sound and exceeding
passion,
Sweetly shapen, terrible, full of thunders,
Clothed with the wind's wings.

Then rejoiced she, laughing with love, and
scattered
Roses, awful roses of holy blossom;
Then the Loves thronged sadly with hidden
faces
Round Aphrodite,

Then the Muses, stricken at heart, were
silent;
Yea, the gods waxed pale; such a song
was that song.
All reluctant, all with a fresh repulsion,
Fled from before her.

All withdrew long since, and the land was
barren,
Full of fruitless women and music only.
Now perchance, when winds are assuaged
at sunset,
Lulled at the dewfall,

By the grey sea-side, unassuaged, unheard
 of,
 Unbeloved, unseen in the ebb of twilight,
 Ghosts of outcast women return lament-
 ing,
 Purged not in Lethe,

Clothed about with flame and with tears,
 and singing
 Songs that move the heart of the shaken
 heaven,
 Songs that break the heart of the earth
 with pity,
 Hearing, to hear them.

AT ELEUSIS.

MEN of Eleusis, ye that with long staves
 Sit in the market-houses, and speak words
 Made sweet with wisdom as the rare wine is
 Thickened with honey; and ye sons of these
 Who in the glad thick streets go up and
 down
 For pastime or grave traffic or mere chance;
 And all fair women having rings of gold
 On hands or hair; and chiefest over these
 I name you, daughters of this man the
 king,
 Who dipping deep smooth pitchers of pure
 brass
 Under the bubbled wells, till each round lip
 Stopped with loose gurgle of waters in-
 coming,
 Found me an old sick woman, lamed and
 lean,
 Beside a growth of builded olive boughs
 Whence multiplied thick song of thick-
 plumed throats—
 Also wet tears filled up my hollow hands
 By reason of my crying into them—
 And pitied me; for as cold water ran
 And washed the pitchers full from lip to lip,
 So washed both eyes full the strong salt of
 tears.
 And ye put water to my mouth, made sweet
 With brown hill-berries; so in time I spoke
 And gathered my loose knees from under
 me.
 Moreover in the broad fair halls this month
 Have I found space and bountiful abode
 To please me. I Demeter speak of this,
 Who am the mother and the mate of things:
 For as ill men by drugs or singing words

Shut the doors inward of the narrowed
 womb
 Like a lock bolted with round iron through,
 Thus I shut up the body and sweet mouth
 Of all soft pasture and the tender land,
 So that no seed can enter in by it
 Though one sow thickly, nor some grain get
 out
 Past the hard clods men cleave and bite
 with steel
 To widen the sealed lips of them for use.
 None of you is there in the peopled street
 But knows how all the dry-drawn furrows
 ache
 With no green spot made count of in the
 black:
 How the wind finds no comfortable grass
 Nor is assuaged with bud nor breath of
 herbs;
 And in hot autumn when ye house the
 stacks,
 All fields are helpless in the sun, all trees
 Stand as a man stripped out of all but skin.
 Nevertheless ye sick have help to get
 By means and stablished ordinance of God;
 For God is wiser than a good man is.
 But never shall new grass be sweet in earth
 Till I get righted of my wound and wrong
 By changing counsel of ill-minded Zeus.
 For of all other gods is none save me
 Clothed with like power to build and break
 the year.
 I make the lesser green begin, when spring
 Touches not earth but with one fearful foot;
 And as a careful gilder with grave art
 Soberly colors and completes the face,

Mouth, chin and all, of some sweet work
in stone,

I carve the shapes of grass and tender corn
And color the ripe edges and long spikes
With the red increase and the grace of gold.
No tradesman in soft wools is cunninger
To kill the secret of the fat white fleece
With stains of blue and purple wrought in it.
Three moons were made and three moons
burnt away

While I held journey hither out of Crete
Comfortless, tended by grave Hecate
Whom my wound stung with double iron
point;

For all my face was like a cloth wrung out
With close and weeping wrinkles, and both
lids

Sodden with salt continuance of tears.
For Hades and the sidelong will of Zeus
And that lame wisdom that has writen
feet,

Cunning, begotten in the bed of Shame,
These three took evil will at me, and made
Such counsel that when time got wing to fly
This Hades out of summer and low fields
Forced the bright body of Persephone:
Out of pure grass, where she lying down,
red flowers

Made their sharp little shadows on her
sides,

Pale heat, palecolor on pale maiden flesh—
And chill water slid over her reddening
feet,

Killing the throbs in their soft blood; and
birds,

Perched next her elbow and pecking at
her hair,

Stretched their necks more to see her than
even to sing.

A sharp thing is it I have need to say;
For Hades holding both white wrists of
hers

Unloosed the girdle and with knot by knot
Bound her between his wheels upon the
seat,

Bound her pure body, holiest yet and dear
To me and God as always, clothed about
With blossoms loosened as her knees went
down,

Let fall as she let go of this and this
By tens and twenties, tumbled to her feet,
White waifs or purple of the pasture.
Therefore with only going up and down
My feet were wasted, and the gracious air,
To me discomfortable and dun, became

As weak smoke blowing in the under world.
And finding in the process of ill days

What part had Zeus herein and how as
mate

He coped with Hades, yokefellow in sin,
I set my lips against the meat of gods
And drank not, neither ate nor slept in
heaven.

Nor in the golden greeting of their mouths
Did ear take note of me, nor eye at all
Track my feet going in the ways of them.

Like a great fire on some strait slip of land
Between two washing inlets of wet sea
That burns the grass up to each lip of
beach

And strengthens, waxing in the growth of
wind

So burnt my soul in me at heaven and
earth,

Each way a ruin and a hungry plague,
Visible evil; nor could any night

Put cool between mine eyelids, nor the sun
With competence of gold fill out my want.
Yea so my flame burnt up the grass and
stones,

Shone to the salt-white edges of thin sea,
Distempered all the gracious work, and
made

Sick change, unseasonable increase of days
And scant avail of seasons; for by this
The fair gods faint in hollow heaven: there
comes

No taste of burnings of the twofold fat
To leave their palates smooth, nor in their
lips

Soft rings of smoke and weak scent wander-
ing;

All cattle waste and rot, and their ill smell
Grows away from the lank unsavory flesh,
That no man slays for offering; the sea
And waters moved beneath the heath and
corn

Preserve the people of fin-twinkling fish,
And river-flies feed thick upon the smooth;
But all earth over is no man or bird
(Except the sweet race of the kingfisher)
That lacks not and is wearied with much
loss.

Meantime the purple inward of the house
Was softened with all grace of scent and
sound

In ear and nostril perfecting my praise;
Faint grape-flowers and cloven honey-cake
And the just grain with dues of the shed
salt

Made me content: yet my hand loosened not
 Its gripe upon your harvest all year long.
 While I, thus woman-muffled in wan flesh
 And waste externals of a perished face,
 Preserved the levels of my wrath and love
 Patiently ruled; and with soft offices
 Cooled the sharp noons and busied the
 warm nights
 In care of this my choice, this child my
 choice,
 Triptolemus, the king's selected son:
 That this fair yearlong body, which hath
 grown
 Strong with strange milk upon the mortal
 lip
 And nerved with half a god, might so in-
 crease
 Outside the bulk and the bare scope of
 man:
 And waxen over large to hold within
 Base breath of yours and this impoverished
 air,
 I might exalt him past the flame of stars,
 The limit and walled reach of the great
 world.
 Therefore my breast made common to his
 mouth
 Immortal savors, and the taste wheicat
 Twice their hard life strains out the colored
 veins
 And twice its brain confirms the narrow
 shell.
 Also at night, unwinding cloth from cloth
 As who unhusks an almond to the white
 And pastures curiously the purer taste,
 I bared the gracious limbs and the soft feet,
 Unswaddled the weak hands, and in mid
 ash
 Laid the sweet flesh of either feeble side,
 More tender for impressure of some touch
 Than wax to any pen; and lit around
 Fire, and made crawl the white worm-
 shapen flame,
 And leap in little angers spark by spark
 At head at once and feet; and the faint hair
 Hissed with rare sprinkles in the closer
 curl,
 And like scaled orange of a keen thin fish
 In sea-water, so in pure fire his feet
 Struck out, and the flame bit not in his
 flesh
 But like a kiss it curled his lip, and heat
 Fluttered his eyelids; so each night I blew
 The hot ash red to purge him to full god,
 Ill is it when fear hungers in the soul

For painful food, and chokes thereon, being
 fed;
 And ill slant eyes interpret the straight sun,
 But in their scope its white is wried to
 black:
 By the queen Metaneira mean I this;
 For with sick wrath upon her lips and
 heart,
 Narrowing with fear the spleenful passages,
 She thought to thread this web's fine ravel
 out,
 Nor leave her shuttle split in combing it;
 Therefore she stole on us, and with hard
 sight
 Peered, and stooped close; then with pale
 open mouth
 As the fire smote her in the eyes between
 Cried, and the child's laugh sharply short-
 ening
 As fire doth under rain, fell oft; the flame
 Writhe'd once all through and died, and in
 thick dark
 Tears fell from mine on the child's weep-
 ing eyes,
 Eyes dispossessed of strong inheritance
 And mortal fallen anew. Who not the less
 From bud of beard to pale-grey flower of
 hair
 Shall wax vinewise to a lordly vine, whose
 grapes
 Bleed the red heavy blood of swollen soft
 wine,
 Subtle with sharp leaves' intricacy, until
 Full of white years and blossom of hoary
 days
 I take him perfected; for whose one sake
 I am thus gracious to the least who stands
 Filled with white wool and girt upon
 As he whose prayer endures upon the lip
 And falls not waste: wherefore let sacrifice
 Burn and run red in all the wider ways;
 Seeing I have sworn by the pale temples'
 hand
 And popped hair of gold Persephone
 Sad-dressed and pleaded low down about
 her brows,
 And by the sorrow in her lips and death
 Her dumb and mournful-mouthed minister,
 My word for you is eased of its harsh weight
 And doubled with soft promise; and your
 king
 Triptolemus, this Celeus dead and swathed
 Purple and pale for golden burial,
 Shall be your helper in my services,
 Dividing earth and capping fruits thereof

In fields where wait, well girt, well-
wreathen, all
The heavy-handed seasons all year through;
Saving the choice of warm spear-headed
grain,

And stooping sharp to the slant-sided share
All beasts that furrow the remeasured
land
With their bowed necks of burden equable.

AUGUST

THERE were four apples on the bough,
Half gold half red, that one might know
The blood was ripe inside the core;
The color of the leaves was more
Like stems of yellow corn that grow
Through all the gold June meadow's floor

The warm smell of the fruit was good
To feed on, and the split green wood,
With all its bearded lips and stains
Of mosses in the cloven veins,
Most pleasant, if one lay or stood
In sunshine or in happy rains.

There were four apples on the tree,
Red stained through gold, that all might
see

The sun went warm from core to rind;
The green leaves made the summer blind
In that soft place they kept for me
With golden apples shut behind.

The leaves caught gold across the sun
And where the bluest air begun,
Thirsted for song to help the heat;
As I to feel my lady's feet
Draw close before the day were done;
Both lips grew dry with dreams of it.

In the mute August afternoon
They trembled to some undertune
Of music in the silver air;
Great pleasure was it to be there
Till green turned duskier and the moon
Colored the corn-sheaves like gold hair.

That August time it was delight
To watch the red moons wane to white
Twixt grey seamed stems of apple-trees;
A sense of heavy harmonies
Grew on the growth of patient night,
More sweet than shapen music is.

But some three hours before the moon
The air, still eager from the noon,
Flagged after heat, not wholly dead;
Against the stem I leant my head;
The color soothed me like a tune,
Green leaves all round the gold and red.

I lay there till the warm smell grew
More sharp, when flecks of yellow dew
Between the round ripe leaves had blurred
The rind with stain and wet; I heard
A wind that blew and breathed and blew,
Too weak to alter its one word.

The wet leaves next the gentle fruit
Felt smoother, and the brown tree-root
Felt the mould warmer: I too felt
(As water feels the slow gold melt
Right thought it when the day burns mute)
The peace of time wherein love dwelt.

There were four apples on the tree,
Gold stained on red that all might see
The sweet blood filled them to the core:
The color of her hair is more
Like stems of fair faint gold, that be
Mown from the harvest's middle-floor.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

THREE damsels in the queen's chamber,
 The queen's mouth was most fair;
 She spake a word of God's mother
 As the combs went in her hair.
 Mary that is of might,
 Bring us to thy Son's sight.

They held the gold combs out from her,
 A span's length off her head;
 She sang this song of God's mother
 And of her bearing-bed
 Mary most full of grace,
 Bring us to thy Son's face.

When she sat at Joseph's hand,
 She looked against her side;
 And either way from the short silk band
 Her girdle was all wried.
 Mary that all good may,
 Bring us to thy Son's way.

Mary had three women for her bed,
 The twain were maiden's clean;
 The first of them had white and red,
 The third had riven green.
 Mary that is so sweet,
 Bring us to thy Son's feet.

She had three women for her hair,
 Two were gloved soft and shod;
 The third had feet and fingers bare,
 She was the likeliest God.
 Mary that wicdleth land,
 Bring us to thy Son's hand.

She had three woman for her ease,
 The twain were good women:
 The first two were the two Maries,
 The third was Magdalen.
 Mary that perfect is,
 Bring us to thy Son's kiss.

Joseph had three workmen in his stall,
 To serve him well upon;
 The first of them were Peter and Paul,
 The third of them was John.
 Mary, God's handmaiden,
 Bring us to thy Son's ken.

"If your child be none other man's,
 But if it be very mine,
 The bedstead shall be gold two spans,
 The bedfoot silver fine."
 Mary that made God mirth,
 Bring us to thy Son's birth.

"If the child be some other man's,
 And if it be none of mine,
 The manger shall bestraw two spans,
 Betwixen kine and kine."
 Mary that made sin cease,
 Bring us to thy Son's peace.

Christ was born upon this wise,
 It fell on such a night,
 Neither with sounds of psalteries,
 Nor with fire for light.
 Mary that is God's spouse,
 Bring us to thy Son's house.

The star came out upon the east
 With a great sound and sweet:
 Kings gave gold to make him feast
 And myrrh for him to eat.
 Mary, of thy sweet mood,
 Bring us to thy Son's good.

He had two handmaids at his head,
 One handmaid at his feet;
 The twain of them were fair and red
 The third one was right sweet.
 Mary that is most wise,
 Bring us to thy Son's eyes. Amen.

* Suggested by a drawing of Mr. D. G. Rossetti's.

THE MASQUE OF QUEEN BERSABE.

A MIRACLE-PLAY

KING DAVID.

KNIGHTS mine, all that be in hall,
I have a council to you all,
Because of this thing God lets fall
Among us for a sign.

For some days hence as I did eat
From kingly dishes my good meat,
There flew a bird between my feet
As red as any wine.

This bird had a long bill of red
And a gold ring above his head;
Long time he sat and nothing said,
Put softly down his neck and fed
From the gilt patens fine:

And as I marvelled at the last
He shut his two keen eyen fast
And suddenly woxe big and brast
Ere one should tell to nine.

PRIMUS MILES.

Sir, note this that I will say;
That Lord who maketh corn with hay
And morrows each of yesterday,
He hath you in his hand.

SECUNDUS MILES (*Paganus quidam*).

By Satan I hold no such thing;
For if wine swell within a king
Whose ears for drink are hot and ring,
The same shall dream of wine-bibbing
Whilst he can lie or stand.

QUEEN BERSABE.

Peace now, lords, for God is heald.
Ye chirk as starlings that be fed
And gape as fishes newly dead;
The devil put your bones to bed,
Lo, this is all to say.

SECUNDUS MILES.

By Mahound, lords, I have good will
This devil's bird to wring and spill;
For now meseems our game goes ill,
Ye have scant hearts to play.

TERTIUS MILES.

Lo, sirs, this word is there said,
That Urias the knight is dead
Through some ill craft; by Poulis head,
I doubt his blood hath made so red
This bird that flew from the queen's bed
Whereof ye have such fear.

KING DAVID.

Yea, my good knave, and is it said
That I can raise men from the dead?
By God I think to have his head
Who saith words of my lady's bed
For any thief to hear.

Et percutiat eum in capite.

QUEEN BERSABE.

I wis men shall spit at me,
And say it were but right for thee
That one should hang thee on a tree;
Ho! it were a fair thing to see
The big stones bruise her false body;
Fie! who shall see her dead?

KING DAVID.

I rede you have no fear of this.
For as ye wot, the first good kiss
I had must be the last of his;
Now are ye queen of mine, I wis,
And lady of a house that is
Full rich of meat and bread.

PRIMUS MILES.

I bid you make good cheer to be
 So fair a queen as all men see.
 And hold us for your lieges free;
 By Peter's soul that hath the key,
 Ye have good hap of it.

SECUNDUS MILES.

I would that he were hanged and dead
 Who hath no joy to see your head
 With gold about it, barred on red;
 I hold him as a sow of lead
 That is so scant of wit.

Tunc dicat NATHAN propheta.

O king, I have a word to thee;
 The child that is in Bersabe
 Shall wither without light to see;
 This word is come of God by me
 For sin that ye have done.
 Because herein ye did not right,
 To take the fair one lamb to smite
 That was of Urias the knight;
 Ye wist he had but one.
 Full many sheep I wot ye had,
 And many women, when ye had;
 To do your will and keep you glad;
 And a good crown about your head
 With gold to show thereon.
 This Urias had one poor house
 With low-barred latoun shot-window,
 And scant of corn to fill a mouse;
 And rusty basnets for his brow;
 To wear them to the bone.
 Yea the roofs also, as men sain,
 Were thin to hold against the rain;
 Therefore what rushes were there lain
 Grew wet withouten foot of men;
 The stancheons were all gone in twain
 As sick man's flesh is gone.
 Nathless he had great joy to see
 The long hair of this Bersabe
 Fall round her lap and round her
 Even to her small soft feet, that be
 Shod now with crimson royally
 And covered with clean gold.
 Likewise great joy he had to kiss
 Her throat, where now the scarlet is
 Against her little chin, I wis,
 That then was but cold.
 No scarlet then her kirtle had
 And little gold about it sprad;

But her red mouth was always glad
 To kiss, albeit the eyes were sad
 With love they had to hold.

SECUNDUS MILES.

How ! old thief, thy wits are lame;
 To clip such it is no shame;
 I rede you in the devil's name,
 Ye come not here to make men game;
 By Termagaunt that maketh grame,
 I shall to-bete thine head.

Hic Diabolus capiat eum.

This knave hath sharp fingers, perfoy;
 Mahound you thank and keep alway,
 And give you good knees to pray;
 What man hath no lust to play,
 The devil wring his ears, I say;
 There is no more but wellaway,
 For now am I dead.

KING DAVID.

Certes his mouth is wried and black,
 Full little pence be in his sack;
 This devil hath him by the back,
 It is no boot to lie.

NATHAN.

Sitteth now still and learn of me
 A little while and ye shall see
 The face of God's strength presently.
 All queens made as this Bersabe,
 All that were fair and foul ye be,
 Come hither; it am I.
Et hic omnes cantabant.

HERODIAS.

I am the queen Herodias.
 This headband of my temples was
 King Herod's gold band woven me,
 This broken dry staff in my hand
 Was the queen's staff of a great land
 Betwixen Perse and Samarie.
 For that one dancing of my feet,
 The fire is come in my green wheat
 From one sea to the other sea.

AHOLIBAH.

I am the queen Aholibah.
 My lips kissed dumb the word of Ah
 Sighed on strange lips grown sick
 thereby
 God wrought to me my royal bed;

The inner work thereof was red,
The outer work was ivory.
My mouth's heat was the heat of flame
For lust towards the kings that came
With horsemen riding royally.

CLEOPATRA.

I am the queen of Ethiope.
Love bade my kissing eyelids ope
That men beholding might praise love.
My hair was wonderful and curled;
My lips held fast the mouth o' the world
To spoil the strength and speech there-
of.
The latter triumph in my breath
Bowed down the beaten brows of death,
Ashamed they had not wrath enough.

ABIHAIL.

I am the queen of Tyrians.
My hair was glorious for twelve spans,
That dried to loose dust afterward.
My stature was a strong man's length:
My neck was like a place of strength
Built with white walls, even and hard.
Like the first noise of rain leaves catch
One from another, snatch by snatch,
Is my praise, hissed against and marred.

AZUBAH.

I am the queen of Amorites.
My face was like a place of lights
With multitudes at festival.
The glory of my gracious brows
Was like God's house made glorious
With colors upon either wall.
Between my brows and hair there was
A white space like a space of glass
With golden candles over all.

AHOLAH.

I am the queen of Amalek.
There was no tender touch or fleck
To spoil my body or bared feet.
My words were soft like dulcimers,
And the first sweet of grape-flowers
Made each side of my bosom sweet.
My raiment was as tender fruit
Whose rind smells sweet of spice-tree root,
Bruised balm-blossom and budded
wheat.

AHINOAM.

I am the queen Ahinoam.
Like the throat of a soft slain lamb
Was my throat, softer veined than his:
My lips were as two grapes the sun
Lays his whole weight of heat upon
Like a mouth heavy with a kiss:
My hair's pure purple a wrought fleece,
My temples therein as a piece
Of a pomegranate's cleaving is.

ATARAII.

I am the queen Sidonian.
My face made faint the face of man,
And strength was bound between my
brows.
Spikenard was hidden in my ships,
Honey and wheat and myrrh in strips,
White wools that shine as color does
Soft linen dyed upon the fold,
Split spice and cores of scented gold
Cedar and broken calamus.

SEMIRAMIS.

I am the queen Semiramis.
The whole world and the sea that is
In fashion like a chrysopras,
The noise of all men laboring,
The priest's mouth tired through thanks-
giving,
The sound of love in the blood's pause,
The strength of love in the blood's beat,
All these were cast beneath my feet
And all found lesser than I was.

HESIONE.

I am the queen Hesione.
The seasons that increased in me
Made my face fairer than all men's.
I had the summer in my hair;
And all the pale gold autumn air
Was as the habit of my sense.
My body was as fire that shone;
God's beauty that makes all things one
Was one among my handmaidens.

CHRYSOthemis.

I am the queen of Samothrace.
God, making roses, made my face
As a rose filled up full with red.
My brows made sharp the straitened seas
From Pontus to that Chersonese

Whereon the ebb'd Asian stream is
shed.

My hair was as sweet scent that drips;
Love's breath begun about my lips
Kindled the lips of people dead.

THOMYEIS.

I am the queen of Scythians.
My strength was like no strength of man's,
My face like day, my breast like
spring.

My fame was felt in the extreme land
That hath sunshine on the one hand
And on the other star-shining.
Yea, and the wine there fails of breath;
Yea, and their life is waste like death;
Yea, and there death is a glad thing.

HARHAS.

I am the queen of Anakim.
In the spent years whose speech is dim,
Whose raiment is the dust and death,
My stately body without stain
Shone as the shining race of rain
Whose hair a great wind scattereth,
Now hath God turned my lips to sighs,
Plucked off mine eyelids from mine eyes,
And sealed with seals my way of breath.

MYRRHA.

I am the queen Arabian.
The tears wherewith mine eyelids ran
Smelt like my perfumed eyelids' smell.
A harsh thirst made my soft mouth hard,
That ached with kisses afterward;
My brain rang like a beaten bell.
As tears on eyes, as fire on wood,
Sin fed upon my breath and blood,
Sin made my breasts subside and swell.

PASIPHAÆ.

I am the queen Pasiphae.
Not all the pure clean-colored sea
Could cleanse or cool my yearning
veins;
Nor any root nor herb that grew,
Flag-leaves that let green water through,
Nor washing of the dews and rains.
From shame's pressed core I wrung the
sweet
Fruit's savour that was death to eat,
Whereof no seed but death remains.

SAPPHO.

I am the queen of Lesbians.
My love, that had no part in man's,
Was sweeter than all shape of sweet.
The intolerable infinite desire
Made my face pale like faded fire
When the ashen pyre falls through with
heat.
My blood was hot wan wine of love,
And my song's sound the sound thereof,
The sound of the delight of it.

MESSALINA.

I am the queen of Italy.
These were the signs God set on me;
A barren beauty subtle and sleek,
Curled carven hair, and cheeks worn wan
With fierce false lips of many a man,
Large temples where the blood ran
weak,
A mouth athirst and amorous
And hungering as the grave's mouth does
That, being an-hungered, cannot speak.

ANESTRIS.

I am the queen of Persians.
My breasts were lordlier than bright swans,
My body as amber fair and thin.
Strange flesh was given my lips for bread,
With poisonous hours my days were fed,
And my feet shod with adder-skin.
In Shushan toward Ecbatane
I wrought my joys with tears and pain,
My loves with blood and bitter sin.

EPHRATH.

I am the queen of Rephaim.
God, that some while refraineth him,
Made in the end a spoil of me.
My rumor was upon the world
As strong sound of swollen water hurled
Through porches of the straining sea.
My hair was like the flag-flower,
And my breasts carven goodlier
Than beryl with chalcedony.

PASITHEA.

I am the queen of Cypriotes.
Mine oarsmen, laboring with brown throats,
Sang of me many a tender thing.
My maidens, girdled loose and braced
With gold from bosom to white waist,

Praised me between their wool-combing.
 All that praise Venus all night long
 With lips like speech and lids like song
 Praised me till song lost heart to sing.

ALACIEL.

I am the queen Alaciel.
 My mouth was like that moist gold cell
 Whereout the thickest honey drips
 Mine eyes were as a grey-green sea;
 The amorous blood that smote on me
 Smote to my feet and finger-tips.
 My throat was whiter than the dove.
 Mine eyelids as the seals of love,
 And as the doors of love my lips.

ERIGONE.

I am the queen Erigone
 The wild wine shed as blood on me
 Made my face brighter than a bride's.
 My large lips had the old thirst of earth,
 Mine arms the might of the old sea's girth
 Bound round the whole world's iron
 sides,
 Within mine eyes and in mine ears
 Were music and the wine of tears,
 And light, and thunder of the tides.
Et hic exant, et dicat Bersabe reginæ.

Alas, God, for thy great pity
 And for the might that is in thee,
 Behold, I woful Bersabe
 Cry out with stoopings of my knee
 And thy wrath laid and bound on me
 Till I may see thy love.
 Behold, Lord, this child is grown
 Within me between bone and bone
 To make me mother of a son,
 Made of my body with strong moan;
 There shall not be another one
 That shall be made hereof.

KING DAVID.

Lord God, alas, what shall I say?
 Lo, thou art as an hundred men
 Both to break and build again:
 The wild ways thou makest plain,
 Thine hands hold the hail and rain,
 And thy fingers both grape and grain;
 Of their largess we be all well fain,
 And of their great pity;
 The sun thou madest of good gold,

Of clean silver the moon cold,
 All the great stars thou hast told
 As thy cattle in thy fold
 Every one by his name of old;
 Wind and water thou hast in hold,
 Both the land and the long sea;
 Both the green sea and the land,
 Lord God, thou hast in hand,
 Both white water and grey sand;
 Upon thy right or thy left hand
 There is no man that may stand;
 Lord, thou rue on me.
 O wise Lord, if thou be keen
 To note things amiss that been,
 I am not worth a shell of bean
 More than an old mare meagre and lean
 For all my wrong-doing with my queen,
 It grew not of our heartes clean,
 But it began of her body.
 For it fell in the hot May
 I stood within a paven way
 Built of fair bright stone, perlay,
 That is as fire of night and day
 And lighteth all my house.
 Therein be neither stones nor sticks,
 Neither red nor white bricks,
 But for cubits five or six
 There is most goodly sardonix
 And amber laid in rows.
 It goes round about my roofs,
 (If ye list ye shall have proofes)
 There is good space for horse and hoofs,
 Plain and nothing perilous.
 For the fair green weather's heat,
 And for the smell of leavens sweet,
 It is no marvel, well ye weet,
 A man to waxen amorous,
 This I say now by my case
 That spied forth of that royal place;
 There I saw in no great space
 Mine own sweet, both body and face,
 Under the fresh boughs.
 In a water that was there
 She wesshe her goodly body bare
 And dried it with her owen hair:
 Both her arms and her knees fair,
 Both bosom and brows;
 Both shoulders and eke thighs
 Tho she wesshe upon this wise;
 Ever she sighed with little sighs,
 And ever she gave God thank.
 Yea, God wot I can well see yet
 Both her breast and her sides all wet
 And her long hair withouten let
 Spread sideways like a drawing net;
 Full dear bought and full far set

Was that sweet thing there y-set:
 It were a hard thing to forget
 How both lips and eyen met,
 Breast and breath sank.
 So goodly a sight as there she was,
 Lying looking on her glass
 By wan water in green grass,
 Yet saw never man.
 So soft and great she was and bright
 With all her body waxen white,
 I woxe nigh blind to see the light
 Shed out of it to left and right;
 This bitter sin from that sweet sight
 Between us twain began.

NATHAN.

Now, sir, be merry anon,
 For ye shall have a full wise son,
 Goodly and great of flesh and bone;
 There shall no king be such an one,
 I swear by Godis rood.
 Therefore, lord, be merry here,
 And go to meat withouten fear,
 And hear a mass with goodly cheer;
 For to all folk ye shall be dear,
 And all folk of your blood.

Et tunc dicant Laudamus.

ST. DOROTHY.

It hath been seen and yet it shall be seen
 That out of tender mouths God's praise
 hath been
 Made perfect, and with wood and simple
 string
 He that played music sweet as shawm-
 playing
 To please himself with softness of all sound;
 And no small thing but hath been some-
 time found
 Full sweet of use, and no such humbleness
 But God hath bruised withal the sentences
 And evidence of wise men witnessing;
 No leaf that is so soft a hidden thing
 It never shall get sight of the great sun;
 The strength of ten has been the strength
 of one,
 And lowliness has waxed imperious.

There was in Rome a man Theophilus
 Of right great blood and gracious ways,
 that had

All noble fashions to make people glad
 And a soft life of pleasurable days;
 He was a goodly man for one to praise,
 Flawless and whole upward from foot to
 head;

His arms were a red hawk that alway fed
 On a small bird with feathers gnawed upon,

Beaten and plucked about the bosom-bone
 Whereby a small round fleck like fire there
 was:

They called it in their tongue lampadiaz;
 This was the banner of the lordly man.
 In many straits of sea and reaches wan
 Full of quick wind, and many a shaken
 firth,

It had seen fighting days of either earth,
 Westward or east of waters Gaditane
 (This was the place of sea-rocks under Spain
 Called after the great praise of Hercules)
 And north beyond the washing Pontic seas,
 Far windy Russian places fabulous,
 And salt fierce tides of storm-swoln Bos-
 phorus.

Now as this lord came straying in Rome
 town

He saw a little lattice open down
 And after it a press of maidens' heads
 That sat upon their cold small quiet beds
 Talking, and played upon short-stringed
 lutes;

And other some ground perfume out of roots
 Gathered by marvellous moons in Asia
 Saffron and aloes and wild cassia,
 Colored all through and smelling of the
 sun;

And over all these was a certain one
Clothed softly, with sweet herbs about her
hair

And bosom flowerful; her face more fair
Than sudden-singing April in soft lands;
Eyed like a gracious bird, and in both
hands

She held a psalter painted green and red.
This Theophile laughed at the heart, and
said;

Now God so help me hither and St. Paul,
As by the new time of their festival
I have good will to take this maid to wife.
And herewith fell to tancies of her life
And soft half-thoughts that ended suddenly.
This is man's guise to please himself, when
he

Shall not see one thing of his pleasant
things,

Nor with outwatch of many travailings
Come to be eased of the least pain he hath
For all his love and all his foolish wrath
And all the heavy manner of his mind.
Thus is he like a fisher fallen blind
That casts his nets across the boat awry
To strike the sea, but lo, he striketh dry
And plucks them back all broken for his
pain

And bites his beard and casts across again
And reaching wrong slips over in the sea.
So hath this man a strangled neck for fee,
For all his cost he chuckles in his throat.
This Theophile that little hereof wote
Laid wait to hear of her what she might be:
Men told him she had name of Dorothy.
And was a lady of a worthy house.

Thereat this knight grew inly glorious
That he should have a love so fair of place.
She was a maiden of most quiet face,
Tender of speech and had no hardihood
But was nigh feeble of her fearful blood;
Her mercy in her was so marvellous
From her least years, that seeing her school-
fellows

That read beside her stricken with a rod,
She would cry sore and say some word to
God

That he would ease her fellow of his pain.
There is no touch of sun or fallen rain
That ever fell on a more gracious thing.

In middle Rome there was in stone-
working

The church of Venus painted royally.
The chapels of it were some two or three,
In each of them her tabernacle was

And a wide window of six feet in glass
Colored with all her works in red and gold.
The altars had bright cloths and cups to
hold

The wine of Venus for the services,
Made out of honey and crushed wood-
berries

That shed sweet yellow through the thick
wet red,

That on high days was borne upon the head
Of Venus' priest for any man to drink;
So that in drinking he should fall to think
On some fair face, and in the thought
thereof

Worship, and such should triumph in his
love.

For this soft wine that did such grace and
good

Was newtrans-shaped and mixed with love's
own blood,

That in the fighting Trojan time was bled;
For which came such a woe to Diomed
That he was stifled after in hard sea.
And some said that this wine-shedding
should be

Made of the falling of Adonis' blood,
That curled upon the thorns and broken
wood

And round the gold silk shoes on Venus'
feet;

The taste thereof was as hot honey sweet
And in the mouth ran soft and riotous.
This was the holiness of Venus' house.

It was their worship that in August days
Twelve maidens should go through their
Roman ways

Naked, and having gold across their brows
And their hair twisted in short golden rows.
To minister to Venus in this wise:
And twelve men chosen in their companies
To match these maidens by the altar-stair,
All in one habit, crowned upon the hair
Among these men was chosen Theophile.

This knight went out and prayed a little
while,

Holding queen Venus by her hands and
knees;

I will give thee twelve royal images
Cut in glad gold, with marvels of wrought
stone

For thy sweet priest to lean and pray upon,
Jasper and hyacinth and chrysopras,
And the strange Asian thalamite that was
Hidden twelve ages under heavy sea
Among the little sleepy pearls, to be

A shrine lit over with soft candle-flame
 Burning all night red as hot brows of shame,
 So thou wilt be my lady without sin.
 Goddess that art all gold outside and in,
 I help me to serve thee in thy holy way.
 Thou knowest, Love, that in my bearing day
 There shone a laughter in the singing stars
 Round the gold ceiled bride-bed wherein

Mars
 Touched thee and had thee in your kissing
 wise.

Now, therefore, sweet kiss thou my maiden's
 eyes

That they may open graciously towards me;
 And this new fashion of thy shrine shall be
 As soft with gold as thine own happy head.
 The goddess, that was painted with face
 red

Between two long green tumbled sides of
 sea,

Stooped her neck sideways, and spake
 pleasantly:

Thou shalt have grace as thou art thrall of
 mine.

And with this came a savor of shed wine
 And plucked-out petals from a rose's head:
 And softly with slow laughs of lip she said,
 Thou shalt have favor all thy days of me.

Then came Theophilus to Dorothy,
 Saying: O sweet, if one should strive or
 speak

Against God's ways, he gets a beaten cheek
 For all his wage and shame above all men.
 Therefore I have no will to turn again
 When God saith "go," lest a worse thing
 fall out.

Then she, misdoubting lest he went about
 To catch her wits, made answer somewhat
 thus:

I have no will, my lord Theophilus,
 To speak against this worthy word of yours:
 Knowing how God's will in all speech en-
 dures,

That save by grace there may no thing be
 said.

Then Theophile waxed light from foot to
 head,

And softly fell upon this answering.

It is well seen you are a chosen thing

To do God service in his gracious way.

I will that you make haste and holiday

To go next year upon the Venus stair,

Covered none else, but crowned upon your
 hair,

And do the service that a maiden doth.

She said: but I titha am Christ's maid were
 loth

To do this thing that hath such bitter name.
 Thereat his brows were beaten with sore
 shame

And he came off and said no other word.

Then his eyes chanced upon his banner-
 bird,

And he fell fingering at the staff of it
 And laughed for wrath and stared between
 his feet.

And out of a chafed heart he spake as thus:
 Lo how she japes at me Theophilus,

Feigning herself a fool and hard to love;

Yet in good time for all she boasteth of

She shall be like a little beaten bird.

And while his mouth was open in that word

He came upon the house Janiculum,

Where some went busily, and other some

Talked in the gate called the gate glorious.

The emperor, which was one Gabalus,

Sat over all and drank chill wine alone.

To whom is come Theophilus anon,

And said as thus: *Beau sire, Dieu vous aide.*

And afterward sat under him, and said

All this thing through as ye have wholly
 heard.

This Gabalus laughed thickly in his
 beard.

Yea, this is righteousness and maiden rule.

Truly, he said, a maid is but a fool.

And japed at them as one full villainous,

In a lewd wise, this heathen Gabalus,

And sent his men to bind her as he bade.

Thus have they taken Dorothy the maid,

And haled her forth as men hale pick-
 purses:

A little need God knows they had of this,

To hale her by her maiden gentle hair.

Thus went she lowly, making a soft prayer,

As one who stays the sweet wine in his
 mouth,

Murmuring with eased lips and is most
 loth

To have done wholly with the sweet of it.

Christ king, fair Christ, that knowest all
 men's wit

And all the feeble fashion of my ways,

O perfect God, that from all yesterdays

Abidest whole with morrows perfected,

I pray thee by thy mother's holy head

Thou help me to do right, that I not slip:

I have no speech nor strength upon my lip,

Except thou help me who art wise and
 sweet.

Do this too for those nails that clove thy feet,

Let me die maiden after many pains.
Though I be least among thy handmaidens,
Doubtless I shall take death more sweetly thus.

Now have they brought her to King
Gabalus,
Who laughed in all his throat some breath-
ing-whiles.

By God, he said, if one should leap two miles,

He were not pained about the sides so much.

This were a soft thing for a man to touch.
Shall one so chafe that hath such little bones?

And shook his throat with thick and
chuckled moans

For laughter that she had such holiness.

What aileth thee, wilt though do services
It were good fare to fare as Venus doth.

Then said this lady with her maiden
mouth,
Shamefaced, and something paler in the
cheek:

Now, sir, albeit my wit and will to speak
Give me no grace in sight of worthy men,
For all my shame yet know I this again,
I may not speak, nor after downlying
Rise up to take delight in lute-playing,
Nor sing nor sleep, nor sit and fold my
hands,

But my soul in some measure understands
God's grace laid like a garment over me.
For this fair God that out of strong sharp sea
Lifted the shapely and green-colored land,
And hath the weight of heaven in his hand
As one might hold a bird, and under him
The heavy golden planets beam by beam
Building the feasting-chambers of his house,
And the large world he holdeth with his
brows,

And with the light of them astonisheth
All place and time and face of life and
death

And motion of the north wind and the
south,

And is the sound within his angel's mouth
Of singing words and words of thankgiv-
ing,

And is the color of the latter spring
And heat upon the summer and the sun,
And is beginning of all things begun
And gathers in him all things to their end,

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And with the fingers of his hand doth bend
The stretched-out sides of heaven like a
sail,

And with his breath he maketh the red pale
And fills with blood faint faces of men dead,
And with the sound between his lips are fed
Iron and fire and the white body of snow,
And blossom of all trees in places low,
And small bright herbs about the little hills,
And fruit pricked softly with birds' tender
bills,

And flight of foam about green fields of sea,
And fourfold strength of the great winds
that be

Moved always outward from beneath his
feet,

And growth of grass and growth of sheaved
wheat

And all green flower of goodly-growing
lands;

And all these things he gathers with his
hands

And covers all their beauty with his wings;
The same, even God that governs all these
things,

Hath set my feet to be upon his ways.

Now therefore for no painfulness of days

I shall put off this service bound on me.

Also, fair sir, ye know this certainly,

How God was in his flesh full chaste and
meek

And gave his face to shame, and either
cheek

Gave up to smiting of men tyrannous.

And here with a great voice this Galabus
Cried out and said: By God's blood and his
bones,

This were good game betwixen night and
nones

For one to sit and hearken to such saws:

I were as lief fall in some big beast's jaws

As hear these women's jaw-teeth chattering;

By God a woman is the harder thing,

One may not put a hook into her mouth.

Now by St. Luke I am so sore adrouth

For all these saws I must needs drink again

But I pray God deliver all us men

From all such noise of women and their
heat.

That is a noble scripture, well I weet,

That likens women to an empty can;

When God said that he was a full wise man.

I trow no man may blame him as for that.

And herewithal he drank a draught, and
spat

And said: Now shall I make an end hereof.
Come near all men and hearken for God's
love,

And ye shall hear a jest or twain, God wot.
And spake as thus with mouth full thick and
hot;

But thou do this thou shalt be shortly slain.
Lo, sir, she said, this death and all this
pain

I take in penance of my bitter sins.
Yea, now, quoth Gabalus, this game begins.
Lo, without sin one shall not live a span.
Lo, this is she that would not look on man
Between her fingers folded in thwart wise.
See how shame hath smitten in her eyes
That was so clean she had not heard of
shame.

Certes, he said, by Gabalus my name,
This two years back I was not so well
pleased.

This were good mirth for sick men to be
eased

And rise up whole and laugh at hearing of.
I pray thee show us something of thy love,
Since thou wast maid thy gown is waxen
wide.

Yea, maid I am, she said, and somewhat
sighed,

As one who thought upon the low fair
house

Where she sat working, with soft bended
brows

Watching her threads, among the school-
maidens.

And she thought well now God hath brought
her thence

She should not come to sew her gold again.

Then cried King Gabalus upon his men
To have her forth and draw her with steel
gins.

And as a man hag-ridden beats and grins
And bends his body sidelong in his bed,
So wagged he with his body and knave's
head,

Gaping at her, and blowing with his breath.
And in good time he gat an evil death
Out of his lewdness with his cursed wives:
His bones were hewn asunder as with
knives

For his misliving, certes it is said.
But all the evil wrought upon this maid,
It were full hard for one to handle it.

For her soft blood was shed upon her feet,
And all her body's color bruised and faint.
But she, as one abiding God's great saint,

Spake not nor wept for all this travail hard.
Wherefore the king commanded afterward
To slay her presently in all men's sight.
And it was now an hour upon the night
And winter-time, and a few stars began.
The weather was yet feeble and all wan
For beating of a weighty wind and snow.
And she came walking in soft wise and
slow,

And many men with faces piteous.
Then came this heavy cursing Gabalus,
That swore full hard into his drunken beard;
And faintly after without any word
Came Theophile some paces off the king.
And in the middle of this wayfaring
Full tenderly beholding her he said:

There is no word of comfort with men
dead

Nor any face and color of things sweet:
But always with lean cheeks and lifted feet
These dead men lie all aching to the blood
With bitter cold, their brow: withouten
hood

Beating for chill, their bodies swathed full
thin:

Alas, what hire shall any have herein
To give his life and get such bitterness?
Also the soul going forth bodiless
Is hurt with naked cold, and no man saith
If there be house or covering for death
To hide the soul that is discomforted.

Then she beholding him a little said:
Alas, fair lord, ye have no wit of this;
For on one side death is full poor of bliss
And as ye say full sharp of bone and lean:
But on the other side is good and green
And hath soft flower of tender-colored hair
Grown on his head, and a red mouth as
fair

As may be kissed with lips: thereto his
face

Is as God's face, and in a perfect place
Full of all sun and color of straight boughs
And waterheads about a painted house
That hath a mile of flowers either way
Outward from it, and blossom-grass of May
Thickening on many a side for length of
heat,

Hath God set death upon a noble seat
Covered with green and flowered in the
fold,

In likeness of a great king grown full old
And gentle with new temperance of blood;
And on his brows a purpled purple hood,
They may not carry any golden thing;

And plays some tune with subt'le fingering
On a small cithern, full of tears and sleep
And heavy pleasure that is quick to weep
And sorrow with the honey in her mouth;
And for this might of music that he doth
Are all souls drawn toward him with great
love

And weep for sweetness of the noise thereof
And bow to him with worship of their
knees;

And all the field is thick with companies
Of fair-clothed men that play on shawms
and lutes

And gather honey of the yellow fruits
Between the branches waxen soft and wide;
And all this peace endures in either side
Of the green land, and God beholdeth all.
And this is girdled with a round fair wall
Made of red stone and cool with heavy
leaves

Grown out against it, and green blossom
cleaves

To the green chinks, and lesser wall-weed
sweet,

Kissing the crannies that are split with
heat,

And branches where the summer draws to
head.

And Theophile burnt in the cheek, and
said:

Yea, could one see it, this were marvellous.
I pray you, at your coming to this house,
Give me some leaf of all those tree-branches;
Seeing how so sharp and white our weather
is,

There is no green nor gracious red to see.

Yea, sir, she said, that shall I certainly.
And from her long sweet throat without a
fleck

Undid the gold, and through her stretched
out neck

The cold axe clove, and smote away her
head:

Out of her throat the tender blood full red
Fell suddenly through all her long soft hair.
And with good speed for hardness of the air
Each man departed to his house again.

Lo, as fair color in the face of men
At seed-time of their blood, or in such wise
As a thing seen increaseth in men's eyes,
Caught first far off by sickly fits of sight —
So a word said, if one shall hear aright,
Abides against the season of its growth.
This Theophile went slowly, as one doth
That is not sure for sickness of his feet;

And counting the white stonework of the
street,

Tears fell out of his eyes for wrath and love,
Making him weep more for the shame
thereof

Than for true pain: so went he half a mile.
And women mocked him, saying: Theo-
phile,

Lo, she is dead; what shall a women have
That loveth such an one? so Christ me save,
I were as lief to love a man new-hung.

Surely this man has bitten on his tongue,
This makes him sad and writhled in his fac

And when they came upon the paven
place

That was called sometime the place amor-
ous,

There came a child before Theophilus,
Bearing a basket, and said suddenly:

Fair sir, this is my mistress Dorothy
That sends you gifts; and with this he was
gone.

In all this earth there is not such an one
For color and straight stature made so fair.

The tender growing gold of his pure hair
Was as wheat growing, and his mouth as
flame.

God called him Holy after his own name;
With gold cloth like fire burning he was
clad.

But for the fair green basket that he had,
It was filled up with heavy white and red:

Great roses stained still where the first rose
bled,

Burning at heart for shame their heart with-
holds:

And the sad color of strong marigolds
That have the sun to kiss their lips for
love;

The flower that Venus' hair is woven of,
The color of fair apples in the sun,

Late peaches gathered when the heat was
done

And the slain air got breath; and after these
The fair faint-headed poppies drunk with
ease,

And heaviness of hollow lilies red.
Then cried they all that saw these things,
and said

It was God's doing, and was marvellous.
And in brief while this knight Theophilus

Is waxen full of faith, and witnesseth
Before the king of God and love and death,

For which the king bade hang him pre-
sently.

A gallows of a goodly piece of tree
 This Gabalus hath made to hang him on.
 Forth of this world to Theophile is gone
 With a wried neck, God give us better
 fare
 Than his that hath a twisted throat to wear;
 But truly for his love God hath him brought
 There where his heavy body grieves him
 nought
 Nor all the people plucking at his feet:

But in his face his lady's face is sweet,
 And through his lips her kissing lips are
 gone:
 God send him peace, and joy of such an one.
 This is the story of St. Dorothy.
 I will you of your mercy pray for me
 Because I wrote these sayings for your
 grace,
 That I may one day see her in the face.

THE TWO DREAMS.

(FROM BOCCACCIO.)

I WILL that if I say a heavy thing
 Your tongues forgive me; seeing ye know
 that spring
 Has flecks and fits of pain to keep her
 sweet,
 And walks sometime with winter-bitten
 feet.
 Moreover it sounds often well to let
 One string, when ye play music, keep at
 fret
 The whole song through; one petal that is
 dead
 Confirms the roses, be they white or red;
 Dead sorrow is not sorrowful to hear
 As the thick noise that breaks mid weeping
 were;
 The sick sound aching in a lifted throat
 Turns to sharp silver of a perfect note;
 And though the rain falls often, and with
 rain
 Late autumn falls on the old red leaves like
 pain,
 I deem that God is not disquieted.
 Also while men are fed with wine and
 bread,
 They shall be fed with sorrow at his hand.
 There grew a rose-garden in Florence
 land

More fair than many; all red summers
 through
 The leaves smelt sweet and sharp of rain,
 and blew
 Sideways with tender wind; and therein fell
 Sweet sound wherewith the green waxed
 audible,
 As a bird's will to sing disturbed his throat
 And set the sharp wings forward like a boat
 Pushed through soft water, moving his
 brown side
 Smooth-shapen as a maid's, and shook with
 pride
 His deep warm bosom, till the heavy sun's
 Set face of heat stopped all the songs at
 once.
 The ways were clean to walk and delicate;
 And when the windy white of March grew
 late,
 Before the trees took heart to face the sun
 With ravelled raiment of lean winter on,
 The roots were thick and hot with hollow
 grass.
 Some roods away a lordly house there
 was,
 Cool with broad courts and latticed passage
 wet
 From rush-flowers and lilies ripe to set,

Sown close among the strewings of the floor;

And either wall of the slow corridor
Was dim with deep device of gracious things;

Some angel's steady mouth and weight of wings

Shut to the side; or Peter with straight stole
And beard cut black against the aureole
That spanned his head from nape to crown;
there

Mary's gold hair, thick to the girdle-tie
Wherein was bound a child with tender feet;

Or the broad cross with blood nigh brown
on it.

Within this house a righteous lord abode,
Ser Averardo; patient of his mood,
And just of judgment; and to child he had
A maid so sweet that her mere sight made glad

Men sorrowing, and unbound the brows of hate;

And where she came, the lips that pain
made strait

Waxed warm and wide, and from untender
grew

Tender as those that sleep brings patience to.
Such long locks had she, that with knee
to chin

She might have wrapped and warmed her
feet therein.

Right seldom fell her face on weeping wise;
Gold hair she had, and golden-colored
eyes,

Filled with clear light and fire and large
repose

Like a fair hound's; no man there is but
knows

Her face was white, and thereto she was
tall;

In no wise lacked there any praise at all
To her most perfect and pure maidenhood;
No sin I think there was in all her blood.

She, where a gold grate shut the roses in,
Dwelt daily through deep summer weeks,
through green

Flushed hours of rain upon the leaves;
and there

Love made him room and space to worship
her

With tender worship of bowed knees, and
wrought

Such pleasure as the pained sense palates
not

For weariness, but at one taste undoes
The heart of its strong sweet, is ravenous
Of all the hidden honey, words and sense
Fail through the tune's imperious prevail-
ence.

In a poor house this lover kept apart,
Long communing with patience next his
heart

If love of his might move that face at all,
Tuned evenwise with colors musical;
Then after length of days he said thus:—

“Love,
For love's own sake and for the love there-
of

Let no harsh words untune your gracious
mood;

For good it were, if anything be good
To comfort me in this pain's plague of
mine;

Seeing thus, how neither sleep nor bread
nor wine

Seems pleasant to me; yea, no thing that is
Seems pleasant to me; only I know this,
Love's ways are sharp for palms of piteous
feet

To travel, but the end of such is sweet:
Now do with me as seemeth you the best.”
She mused a little, as one holds his guest
By the hand musing, with her face borne
down:

Then said: “Yea, though such bitter seed
be sown,

Have no more care of all that you have
said;

Since if there is no sleep will bind your
head,

Lo, I am fain to help you certainly;
Christ knoweth, sir, if I would have you
die;

There is no pleasure when a man is dead.*
Thereat he kissed her hands and yellow
head

And clipped her fair long body many times;
I have no wit to shape in written rhymes
A scanty time of this great joy they had

They were too near love's secret to be
glad

As whoso deems the core will surely melt
From the warm fruit his lips caress, hath
felt

Some bitter kernel where the teeth shut
hard:

Or as sweet music sharpens afterward,
Being half disrelished both for sharp and
sweet;

As sea-water, having killed over-heat

In a man's body, chills it with faint ache;
So their sense, burdened only for love's
sake,

Failed for pure love; yet so time served
their wit,
They saved each day some gold reserves of
it,

Being wiser in love's riddle than such be
Whom fragments feed with his chance
charity.

All things felt sweet were felt sweet over-
much;

The rose-thorn's prickle dangerous to
touch,

And flecks of fire in the thin leaf-shadows;
Too keen the breathed honey of the rose,

Its red too harsh a weight on feasted eyes;
They were so far gone in love's histories,

Beyond all shape and color and mere breath
Where pleasure has for kinsfolk sleep and
death,

And strength of soul and body waxen blind
For weariness, and flesh entailed with
mind,

When the keen edge of sense foretasteth
sin.

Even this green place the summer caught
therr in

Seemed half deflowered and sick with
heaten leaves

In their strayed eyes; these gold flower-
fumed eyes

Burnt out to make the sun's love offering,
The midnoon's prayer, the rose's thanks-

giving,
The tree's weight burdening the strength-
less air,

The shape of her stilled eyes, her colored
hair,

Her body's balance from the moving feet —
All this, found fair, lacked yet one grain of
sweet

It had some warm weeks back: so perisheth
On May's new lip the tender April breath:
So those same walks the wind sowed lilies
in

All April through, and all their latter kin
Of languid leaves whereon the Autumn
blows—

The dead red raiment of the last year's
rose—

The last year's laurel, and the last year's
love,

Fade, and grow things that death grows
weary of.

What man will gather in red summer-time

The fruit of some obscure and hoary rhyme
Heard last midwinter, taste the heart in it,

Mould the smooth semitones afresh, refit
The fair limbs ruined, flush the dead blood
through

With color, make all broken beauties new
For love's new lesson—shall not such find

pain
When the marred music laboring in his
brain

Frets him with sweet sharp fragments, and
lets slip

One word that might have satisfied his
lip—

One touch that might put fire in all the
chords?

This was her pain: to miss from all sweet
words

Some taste of sound, diverse and delicate—
Some speech the old love found out to

compensate
For seasons of shut lips and drowsiness—

Some grace, some word the old love found
out to bless

Passionless months and undelighted weeks.
The flowers had lost their summer-scented

cheeks
Their lips were no more sweet than daily
breath:

The year was plagued with instances of
death.

So fell it, these were sitting in cool grass
With leaves about, and many a bird there

was
Where the green shadow thickest im-
pleached

Soft fruit and withen spray and blossom
bleached

Dry in the sun or washed with rains to
white:

Her girdle was pure silk, the bosom bright
With purple as purple water and gold

wrought in.
One branch had touched with dusk her lips

and chin,
Made violet of the throat, abashed with

shade
The breast's bright plaited work: but

nothing frayed
The sun's large kiss on the luxurious hair.

Her beauty was new color to the air
And music to the silent many birds.

Love was an-hungered for some perfect
words

To praise her with; but only her low name
 "Andrevuola" came thrice, and thrice put
 shame

In her clear cheek, so fruitful with new red
 That for pure love straightway shame's self
 was dead.

Then with lids gathered as who late had
 wept

She began saying: "I have so little slept
 My lids drowse now against the very sun;
 Yea, the brain aching with a dream begun
 Beats like a fitful blood; kiss but both
 brows,

And you shall pluck my thoughts grown
 cangerous

Almost away." He said thus, kissing them:
 "O sole sweet thing that God is glad to
 name,

My one gold gift, if dreams be sharp and
 sore

Shall not the waking time increase much
 more

With taste and sound, sweet eyesight or
 sweet scent?

Has any heat too hard and insolent
 Burnt bare the tender married leaves, un-
 done

The maiden grass shut under from the sun?
 Where in this world is room enough for
 pain?"

The feverish finger of love had touched
 again

Her lips with happier blood; the pain lay
 meek

In her fair face, nor altered lip nor cheek
 With pal'or or with pulse; but in her mouth
 Love thirsted as a man wayfaring doth,
 Making it humble as weak hunger is.

She lay close to him, bade do this and this,
 Say that, sing thus: then almost weeping-
 ripe

Crouched, then laughed low. As one that
 fain would wipe

The old record out of old things done and
 dead,

She rose, she heaved her hands up, and
 waxed red

For wilful heart and blameless fear of
 blame;

Saying "Though my wits be weak, this is
 no shame

For a poor maid whom love so punisheth
 With heats of hesitation and stopped breath
 That with my dreams I live yet heavily
 For pure sad heart and faith's humility.

Now be not wroth and I will shew you
 this.

"Methought our lips upon their second
 kiss

Met in this place, and a fair day we had
 And fair soft leaves that waxed and were
 not sad

With shaken rain or bitten through with
 drouth;

When I, beholding ever how your mouth
 Waited for mine, the throat being fallen
 back,

Saw crawl thereout a live thing flaked with
 black

Specks of brute slime and leper-colored
 scale,

A devil's hide with foul flame-written grail
 Fashioned where hell's heat festers loath-
 somest;

And that brief speech may ease me of the
 rest,

Thus were you slain and eaten of the thing.
 My waked eyes felt the new day shuddering
 On their low lids, felt the whole east so
 beat,

Pant with close pulse of such a plague-
 struck heat,

As if the palpitating dawn drew breath
 For horror, breathing between life and
 death,

Till the sun sprang blood-bright and vio-
 lent."

So finishing, her soft strength wholly spent,
 She gazed each way, lest some brute-hooved
 thing,

The timeless travail of hell's childbearing,
 Should threat upon the sudden: whereat he,
 For relish of her tasted misery

And tender little thornprick of her pain,
 Laughed with mere love. What lover
 among men

But hath his sense fed sovereignly 'twixt
 whiles

With tears and covered eyelids and sick
 smiles

And soft disaster of a pained face?

What pain, established in so sweet a place,
 But the plucked leaf of it smells fragrantly?

What color burning man's wide-open eye
 But may be pleasurably seen? what sense

Keeps in its hot sharp extreme violence
 No savor of sweet things? The bereaved

blood
 And emptied flesh in their most broken
 mood

Fail not so wholly, famish not when thus
 Past honey keeps the starved lip covetous,
 Therefore this speech from a glad mouth
 began,
 Breathed in her tender hair and temples
 wan
 Like one prolonged kiss while the lips had
 breath:
 "Sleep, that abides in vassalage of death
 And in death's service wears out half his
 age,
 Hath his dreams full of deadly vassalage,
 Shadow and sound of things ungracious;
 Fair shallow faces, hooded bloodless brows,
 And mouths past kissing; yea, myself have
 had
 As harsh a dream as holds you eyelids sad.
 "This dream I tell you came three nights
 ago;
 In full mid sleep I took a whim to know
 How sweet things might be; so I turned
 and thought;
 But save my dream all sweet availed me
 not.
 First came a smell of pounded spice and
 scent
 Such as God ripens in some continent
 Of utmost amber in the Syrian sea;
 And breaths as though some costly rose
 could be
 Spoiled slowly, wasted by some bitter fire
 To burn the sweet out leaf by leaf, and tire
 The flower's poor heart with heat and
 waste, to make
 Strong magic for some perfumed woman's
 sake.
 Then a cool naked sense beneath my feet
 Of bud and blossom; and sound of veins
 that beat
 As if a lute should play of its own heart
 And fearfully, not smitten of either part;
 And all my blood it filled with sharp and
 sweet
 As gold swoln grain fills out the husked
 wheat;
 So I rose naked from the bed, and stood
 Counting the mobile measure in my blood
 Some pleasant while, and through each
 limb there came
 Swift little pleasures pungent as a flame,
 Felt in the thrilling flesh and veins as
 much
 As the outer curls that feel the comb's first
 touch
 Thrill to the roots and shiver as from fire;

And blind between my dream and my de-
 sire
 I seemed to stand and held my spirit still
 Lest this should cease. A child whose
 fingers spill
 Honey from cells forgotten of the bee
 Is less afraid to stir the hive and see
 Some wasp's bright back inside, than I to
 feel
 Some finger-touch disturb the flesh like
 steel.
 I prayed thus; Let me catch a secret here
 So sweet, it sharpens the sweet taste of
 fear
 And takes the mouth with edge of wine; I
 would
 Have here some color and smooth shape as
 good
 As those in heaven whom the chief garden
 hides
 With low grape-blossom veiling their white
 sides
 And lesser tendrils that so bind and blind
 Their eyes and feet, that if one come
 behind
 To touch them hair they see not, neither
 fly;
 This would I see in heaven and not die.
 So praying; I had nigh cried out and knelt,
 So wholly my prayer filled me: till I felt
 In the dumb night's warm weight of glow-
 ing gloom
 Somewhat that altered all my sleeping-
 room,
 And made it like a green low place wherein
 Maids mix to bathe: one sets her small
 warm chin
 Against a ripple that the angry pearl
 May flow like flame about her: the next
 curl
 Dips in some eddy colored of the sun
 To wash the dust well out; another one
 Holds a straight ankle in her hand and
 swings
 With lavish body sidelong, so that rings
 Of fierce sweet water, swollen and splendid,
 fail
 All round her fine and floated body pale,
 Swayed flower fashion, and her balanced
 side
 Swerved edgeways lets the weight of water
 slide,
 As taken in some underflow of sea
 Swerves the banked gold of sea-flowers;
 but she

Pulls down some branch to keep her perfect head

Clear of the river: even from wall to bed,
I tell you, was my room transfigured so.

Sweet, green and warm it was, nor could one know

If there were walls or leaves, or if there was
No bed's green curtain, but mere gentle grass.

There were set also hard against the feet
Gold plates with honey and green grapes to eat,

With the cool water's noise to hear in rhymes:

And a wind warmed me full of furze and limes

And all hot sweets the heavy summer fills
To the round brim of smooth cup-shapen hills.

Next the grave walking of a woman's feet
Made my veins hesitate, and gracious heat
Made thick the lids and leaden on mine eyes:

And I thought ever, surely it were wise
Not yet to see her: this may last (who knows?)

Five minutes; the poor rose is twice a rose
Because it turns a face to her, the wind
Sings that way; hath this woman ever sinned,

I wonder? as a boy with apple-rind,
I played with pleasures, made them to my mind,

Changed each ere tasting. When she came indeed,

First her hair touched me, then I grew to feed

On the sense of her hand; her mouth at last

Touched me between the cheek and lip and past

Over my face with kisses here and there
Sown in and out across the eyes and hair.

Still I said nothing; till she set her face
More close and harder on the kissing-place,
And her mouth caught like a snake's mouth, and stung

So faint and tenderly, the fang scarce clung

More than a bird's foot: yet a wound it grew,

A great one, let this red mark witness you
Under the left breast; and the stroke thereof

So clove my sense that I woke out of love

And knew not what this dream was nor had wit;

But now God knows if I have skill of it."

Hereat she laid one palm against her lips

To stop their trembling; as when water slips

Out of a beak-mouthed vessel with faint noise

And chuckles in the narrow throat and cloys

The carven rims with murmuring, so came
Words in her lips with no word right of them,

A beaten speech thick and disconsolate,
Till his smile ceasing waxed compassionate

Of her sore fear that grew from anything--
The sound of the strong summer thickening

In heated leaves of the smooth apple-trees:
The day's breath felt about the ash-branches

And noises of the noon whose weight still grew

On the hot heavy-headed flowers, and drew

Their red mouths open till the rose-heart ached;

For eastward all the crowding rose was slaked

And soothed with shade: but westward all its growth

Seemed to breathe hard with heat as a man doth

Who feels his temples newly feverous.
And even with such motion in her brows

As that man hath in whom sick days begin,
She turned her throat and spake, her voice being thin

As a sick man's, sudden and tremulous;
"Sweet, if this end be come indeed on us,

Let us love more;" and held his mouth with hers.

As the first sound of flooded hill-waters
Is heard by people of the meadow-grass,

Or ever a wandering waif of ruin pass
With whirling stones and foam of the brown stream

Flaked with fierce yellow: so beholding him

She felt before tears came her eyelids wet,
Saw the face deadly thin where life was yet,

Heard his throat's harsh last moan before it clomb:

And he, with close mouth passionate and dumb

Burned at her lips: so lay they without
speech,
Each grasping other, and the eyes of each
Fed in the other's face: till suddenly
He cried out with a little broken cry
This word "O help me, sweet, I am but
dead."

And even so saying, the color of fair red
Was gone out of his face, and his blood's
beat

Fell, and stark death made sharp his up-
ward feet

And pointed hands: and without moan he
died.

Pain smote her sudden in the brows and
side,

Strained her lips open and made burn her
eyes:

For the pure sharpness of her miseries
She had no heart's pain, but mere body's
wrack;

But at the last her beaten blood drew back
Slowly upon her face, and her stunned
brows

Suddenly grown aware and piteous
Gathered themselves, her eyes shone, her
hard breath

Came as though one nigh dead came back
from death;

Her lips throbbed, and life trembled through
her hair.

And in brief while she thought to bury
there

The dead man that her love might lie with
him

In a sweet bed under the rose-roots dim
And soft earth round the branched apple-
trees,

Full of hushed heat and heavy with great
ease,

And no man entering divide him thence.
Wherefore she bade one of her hand-
maidens

To be her help to do upon this wise.

And saying so the tears out of her eyes

Fell without noise and comforted her heart:

Yea, her great pain eased of the sorest part
Began to soften in her sense of it.

There under all the little branches sweet

The place was shapen of his burial;

They shed thereon no thing funereal,

But colored leaves of latter rose-blossom,

Stems of soft grass, some withered red and
some

Fair and flesh-blooded; and spoil splendor
Of marigold and great spent sunflower.

And afterward she came back without
word

To her own house; two days went, and the
third

Went, and she showed her father of this
thing.

And for great grief of her soul's travelling
He gave consent she should endure in
peace

Till her life's end; yea, till her time should
cease,

She should abide in fellowship of pain.

And having lived a holy year or twain

She died of pure waste heart and weariness.

And for love's honor in her love's distress

This word was written over her tomb's
head;

"Here dead she lieth, for whose sake Love
is dead."

AHOLIBAH.

In the beginning God made thee

A woman well to look upon,

Thy tender body as a tree

Whereon cool wind hath always blown

Till the clean branches be well grown.

There was none like thee in the land;

The girls that were thy bondwomen

Did bind thee with a purple band;

Upon thy forehead, that all men,

Should know thee for God's hand-
maiden.

Strange raiment clad thee like a bride,
 With silk to wear on hands and feet
 And plates of gold on either side:
 Wine made thee glad, and thou didst eat
 Honey, and choice of pleasant meat.

And fishers in the middle sea
 Did get thee sea-fish and sea-weeds
 In color like the robes on thee;
 And curious work of plaited reeds,
 And wools wherein live purple bleeds.

And round the edges of thy cup
 Men wrought thee marvels out of gold,
 Strong snakes with lean throats lifted up,
 Large eyes whereon the brows had hold,
 And scaly things their slime kept cold.

For thee they blew soft wind in flutes
 And ground sweet roots for cunning scent;

Made slow because of many lutes,
 The wind among thy chambers went
 Wherein no light was violent.

God called thy name Aholibah,
 His tabernacle being in thee,
 A witness through waste Asia;
 Thou wert a tent sewn cunningly
 With gold and colors of the sea.

God gave thee gracious ministers
 And all their work who plait and weave:

The cunning of embroiderers
 That sew the pillow to the sleeve,
 And likeness of all things that live.

Thy garments upon thee were fair
 With scarlet and with yellow thread;
 Also the weaving of thine hair
 Was as fine gold upon thy head,
 And thy silk shoes were sewn with red.

All sweet things he bade sift, and ground
 As a man grindeth wheat in mills,
 With strong wheels alway going round;
 He gave thee corn, and grass that fills
 The cattle on a thousand hills.

The wine of many seasons fed
 Thy mouth, and made it fair and clean;
 Sweet oil was poured out on thy head
 And ran down like cool rain between
 The strait close locks it melted in.

The strong men and the captains knew
 Thy chambers wrought and fashioned
 With gold and covering of blue,
 And the blue raiment of thine head
 Who sat on a stately bed.

All these had on their garments wrought
 The shape of beasts and creeping things,

The body that availeth not,
 Flat backs of worms and veined wings,
 And the lewd bulk that sleeps and stings.

Also the chosen of the years,
 The multitude being at ease,
 With sackbuts and with dulcimers
 And noise of shawms and psalteries
 Made mirth within the ears of these.

But as a common woman doth,
 Thou didst think evil and devise;
 The sweet smell of thy breast and mouth
 Thou madest as the harlot's wise,
 And there was painting on thine eyes.

Yea, in the woven guest-chamber
 And by the painted passages
 Where the strange gracious paintings were,
 State upon state of companies,
 There came on thee the lust of these.

Because of shapes on either wall
 Sea-colored from some rare blue shell
 At many a Tyrian interval,
 Horsemen on horses, girdled well,
 Delicate and desirable,

Thou saidest: I am sick of love:
 Stay me with flagons, comfort me
 With apples for my pain thereof
 Till my hands gather in his tree
 That fruit wherein my lips would be.

Yea, saidest thou, I will go up
 When there is no more shade than one
 May cover with a hollow cup,
 And make my bed against the sun
 Till my blood's violence be done.

Thy mouth was leant upon the wall
 Against the painted mouth, thy chin
 Touched the hair's painted curve and fall:
 Thy deep throat, fallen lax and thin,
 Worked as the blood's heat worked therein.

Therefore, O thou Aholibah,
 God is not glad because of thee;
 And thy fine gold shall pass away
 Like those fair coins of ore that be
 Washed over by the middle sea.

Then will one make thy body bare
 To strip it of all gracious things,
 And pluck the cover from thine hair,
 And break the gift of many kings,
 Thy wrist-rings and thine ankle-rings.

Likewise the man whose body joins
 To thy smooth body, as was said,
 Who hath a girdle on his loins
 And dyed attire upon his head—
 The same who, seeing, worshipped,

Because thy face was like the face
 Of a clean maiden that smells sweet,
 Because thy gait was as the pace
 Of one that opens not her feet
 And is not heard within the street—

Even he, O thou Aholibah,
 Made separate from thy desire,
 Shall cut thy nose and ears away
 And bruise thee for thy body's hire
 And burn the residue with fire.

Then shall the heathen people say
 The multitude being at ease;
 Lo, this is that Aholibah
 Whose name was blown among strange
 seas,
 Grown old with soft adulteries.

Also her bed was made of green,
 Her windows beautiful for glass
 That she had made her bed between:
 Yea, for pure lust her body was
 Made like white summer-colored grass.

Her raiment was a strong man's spoil;
 Upon a table by a bed
 She set mine incense and mine oil
 To be the beauty of her head
 In chambers walled about with red.

Also between the walls she had
 Fair faces of strong men portrayed;
 All girded round the loins, and clad
 With several cloths of woven braid
 And garments marvellously made.

Therefore the wrath of God shall be
 Set as a watch upon her way;
 And whoso findeth by the sea
 Blown dust of bones will hardly say
 If his were that Aholibah.

LOVE AND SLEEP.

LYING asleep between the strokes of night
 I saw my love lean over my sad bed,
 Pale as the duskiest lily's leaf or head,
 Smooth-skinned and dark, with bare throat
 made to bite,
 Too wan for blushing and too warm for
 white,
 But perfect-colored without white or red.
 And her lips opened amorously, and
 said—
 I wist not what, saving one word—De-
 light.

And all her face was honey to my mouth,
 And all her body pasture to mine eyes;
 The long lithe arms and hotter hands
 than fire,
 The quivering flanks, hair smelling of the
 south,
 The bright light feet, the splendid supple
 thighs
 And glittering eyelids of my soul's
 desire.

MADONNA MIA.

UNDER green apple boughs
That never a storm will rouse,
My lady hath her house
Between two bowers;
In either of the twain
Red roses full of rain;
She hath for bondwomen
All kind of flowers.

She hath no handmaid fair
To draw her curled gold hair
Through rings of gold that bear
Her whole hair's weight;
She hath no maids to stand
Gold-clothed on either hand;
In all the great green land
None is so great.

She hath no more to wear
But one white hood of vair
Drawn over eyes and hair,
Wrought with strange gold,
Made for some great queen's head,
Some fair great queen since dead;
And one strait gown of red
Against the cold.

Beneath her eyelids deep
Love lying seems asleep,
Love, swift to wake, to weep,
To laugh to gaze;
Her breasts are like white birds,
And all her gracious words
As water-grass to herds
In the June-days.

To her all dews that fall
And rains are musical;
Her flowers are fed from all,
Her joys from these;
In the deep-feathered firs
Their gift of joy is hers,
In the least breath that stirs
Across the trees.

She grows with greenest leaves,
Ripens with reddest sheaves,
Forgets, remembers, grieves,
And is not sad;
The quiet lands and skies
Leave light upon her eyes;
None knows her, weak or wise,
Or tired or glad.

None knows, none understands,
What flowers are like her hands;
Though you should search all lands
Wherein time grows,
What snows are like her feet,
Though his eyes burn with heat
Through gazing on my sweet,
Yet no man knows

Only this thing is said;
That white and gold and red,
God's three chief words, man's bread
And oil and wine,
Were given her for dowers,
And kingdom of all hours,
And grace of goodly flowers
And various vine.

This is my lady's praise:
God after many days
Wrought her in unknown ways,
In sunset lands;
This was my lady's birth;
God gave her might and mirth
And laid his whole sweet earth
Between her hands.

Under deep apple-boughs
My lady hath her house;
She wears upon her brows
The flower thereof;
All saying but what God saith
To her is as vain breath;
She is more strong than death,
Being strong as love.

THE KING'S DAUGHTER.

We were ten maidens in the green corn,
 Small red leaves in the mill-water:
 Fairer maidens never were born,
 Apples of gold for the king's daughter.

We were ten maidens by a well-head,
 Small white birds in the mill-water:
 Sweeter maidens never were wed,
 Rings of red for the king's daughter.

The first to spin, the second to sing,
 Seeds of wheat in the mill-water;
 The third may was a goodly thing,
 White bread and brown for the king's daughter.

The fourth to sew and the fifth to play,
 Fair green weed in the mill-water;
 The sixth may was a goodly may,
 White wine and red for the king's daughter.

The seventh to woo, the eighth to wed,
 Fair thin reeds in the mill-water;
 The ninth had gold work on her head,
 Honey in the comb for the king's daughter.

The ninth had gold work round her hair,
 Fallen flowers in the mill-water;
 The tenth may was goodly and fair,
 Golden gloves for the king's daughter.

We were ten maidens in a field green,
 Fallen fruit in the mill-water;
 Fairer maidens never have been,
 Golden sleeves for the king's daughter.

By there comes the king's young son,
 A little wind in the mill-water;
 "Out of ten maidens ye'll grant me one,"
 A crown of red for the king's daughter.

"Out of ten mayes ye'll give me the best,"
 A little rain in the mill-water;
 A bed of yellow straw for all the rest,
 A bed of gold for the king's daughter.

He's ta'en out the goodliest,
 Rain that rains in the mill-water;
 A comb of yellow shell for all the rest,
 A comb of gold for the king's daughter.

He's made her bed to the goodliest,
 Wind and hail in the mill-water;
 A grass girdle for all the rest,
 A girdle of arms for the king's daughter.

He's set his heart to the goodliest,
 Snow that snows in the mill-water;
 Nine little kisses for all the rest,
 An hundredfold for the king's daughter.

He's ta'en his leave at the goodliest,
 Broken boats in the mill-water;
 Golden gifts for all the rest,
 Sorrow of heart for the king's daughter.

"Ye'll make a grave for my fair body,"
 Running rain in the mill-water;
 "And ye'll streek my brother at the side of me,"
 The pains of hell for the king's daughter.

AFTER DEATH.

THE four boards of the coffin lid
 Heard all the dead men did.

The first curse was in his mouth,
 Made of grave's mould and deadly drouth.

The next curse was in his head,
 Made of God's work discomfited.

The next curse was in his hands,
 Made out of two grave-bands.

The next curse was in his feet,
Made out of a grave-sheet.

"I had fair coins red and white,
And my name was as great light;

I had fair clothes green and red,
And strong gold bound round my head.

But no meat comes in my mouth,
Now I fare as the worm doth;

And no gold binds in my hair,
Now I fare as the blind fare.

My live thews were of great strength,
Now I am waxen a span's length;

My live sides were full of lust,
Now are they dried with dust."

The first board spake and said:
"Is it best eating flesh or bread?"

The second answered it:
"Is wine or honey the more sweet?"

The third board spake and said:
"Is red gold worth a girl's gold head?"

The fourth made answer thus:
"All these things are as one with us."

The dead man asked of them:
"Is the green land stained brown with
flame?"

Have they hewn my son for beasts to eat,
And my wife's body for beasts' meat?

Have they boiled my maid in a brass pan,
And built a gallows to hang my man?"

The boards said to him:
"This is a lewd thing that ye deem.

Your wife has gotten a golden bed,
All the sheets are sewn with red.

Your son has gotten a coat of silk,
The sleeves are soft as curded milk.

Your maid has gotten a kirtle new,
All the skirt has braids of blue.

Your man has gotten both ring and glove,
Wrought well for eyes to love."

The dead man answered thus:
"What good gift shall God give us?"

The boards answered him anon:
"Flesh to feed hell's worm upon."

MAY JANET.

(BRETON.)

"STAND up, stand up, thou May Janet,
And go to the wars with me."
He's drawn her by both hands
With her face against the sea.

"He that strews red shall gather white,
He that sows white reap red.
Before your face and my daughter's
Meet in a marriage bed.

"Gold coin shall grow in the yellow field,
Green corn in the green sea-water,
And red fruit grow of the rose's red,
Ere your fruit grow in her."

"But I shall have her by land," he said,
"Or I shall have her by sea,
Or I shall have her by strong treason
And no grace go with me."

Her father's drawn her by both hands,
He's rent her gown from her,
He's ta'en the smock round her body,
Cast in the sea-water.

The captain's drawn her by both sides
Out of the fair green sea;
"Stand up, stand up, thou May Janet,
And come to the war with me."

The first town they came to
There was a blue bride-chamber;
He clothed her on with silk
And belted her with amber.

The second town they came to
The bridesmen feasted knee to knee;
He clothed her on with silver,
A stately thing to see.

The third town they came to
The bridesmaids all had gowns of gold;
He clothed her on with purple,
A rich thing to behold.

The last town they came to
He clothed her white and red,
With a green flag either side of her
And a gold flag overhead.

THE BLOODY SON.

(FINNISH.)

"O WHERE have ye been the morn sae late,
My merry son, come tell me hither?
O where have ye been the morn sae late?
And I wot I hae but anither."

"By the water-gate, by the water-gate
O dear mither."

"And whattin kin' o' wark had ye there to
make,

My merry son, come tell me hither?
And whattin kin' o' wark had ye there to
make?

And I wot I hae but anither."
"I watered my steeds with water frae the
lake,
O dear mither."

"Why is your coat sae fouled the day
My merry son, come tell me hither?
Why is your coat sae fouled the day?

And I wot I hae but anither."
"The steeds wer stamping sair by the
weary banks of clay,
O dear mither."

"And where gat ye thae sleeves of red,
My merry son, come tell me hither?
And where gat ye thae sleeves of red?
And I wot I hae but anither."

"I have slain my ae brither by the weary
water-head,
O dear mither."

"And where will ye gang to mak your
mend?

My merry son, come tell me hither?
And where will ye gang to mak your mend?
And I wot I hae not anither."

"The warldis way, to the warldis end,
O dear mither."

And what will ye leave your father dear,
 My merry son, come tell me hither ?
 And what will ye leave your father dear ?
 And I wot I hae not anither "
 " The wood to fell and the logs to bear,
 For he'll never see my body mair,
 O dear mither."

" And what will ye leave your mither dear,
 My merry son, come tell me hither ?
 And what will ye leave your mither dear ?
 And I wot I hae not anither "
 " The wool to card and the wool to wear,
 For ye'll never see my body mair,
 O dear mither."

" And what will ye leave for your wife to
 take,
 My merry son, come tell me hither ?
 And what will ye leave for your wife to
 take ?
 And I wot I hae not anither."
 " A goodly gown and a fair new make,
 For she'll do nae mair for my body's sake,
 O dear mither."

" And what will ye leave your young son
 fair,
 My merry son, come tell me hither ?
 And what will ye leave your young son
 fair ?
 And I wot ye hae not anither."
 " A twiggen school-rod for his body to bear,
 f'ough it garred him greet he'll get nae
 mair,
 O dear mither."

" And what will ye leave your little daugh-
 ter sweet ?
 My merry son, come tell me hither ?

And what will ye leave your little daughter
 sweet ?

And I wot ye hae not anither."
 " Wild mulberries for her mouth to eat,
 She'll get nae mair though it garred her
 greet,
 O dear mither."

" And when will ye come back frae roamin',
 My merry son come tell me hither ?
 And when will ye come back frae roamin' ?
 And I wot I hae not anither."
 " When the sunrise out of the north is
 comen,
 O dear mither."

" When shall the sunrise on the north side
 be,
 My merry son, come tell me hither ?
 When shall the sunrise on the north side
 be ?
 And I wot I hae not anither."
 " When chuckie-stanes shall swim in the
 sea,
 O dear mither,"

" When shall stanes in the sea swim,
 My merry son, come tell me hither ?
 When shall stanes in the sea swim ?
 And I wot I hae not anither."
 " When biidies' feathers are as lead therein,
 O dear mither."

" When shall feathers be as lead,
 My merry son. come tell me hither ?
 When shall feathers be as lead ?
 And I wot I hae not anither."
 " When God shall judge between the quick
 and dead,
 O dear mither."

THE SEA-SWALLOWS.

This fell when Christmas lights were done,
 Red rose leaves will never make wine;
 But before the Easter lights begun;
 The ways are sair fra' the Till to the
 Tyne.

Two lovers sat where the rowan blows
 And all the grass is heavy and fine,
 By the gathering place of the sea-swallows
 When the wind brings them over Tyne.

Blossom of broom will never make bread,
 Red rose leaves will never make wine:
 Between her brows she is grown red,
 That was full white in the fields by Tyne.

"O what is this thing ye have on,
 Show me now, sweet daughter of mine?"

"O father, this is my little son
 That I found hid in the sides of Tyne."

"O what will ye give my son to eat,
 Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"Fen-water and adder's meat,
 The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

"Or what will ye get my son to wear,
 Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"A weed and a web of nettle's hair,
 The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

"Or what will ye take to line his bed,
 Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"Two black stones at the kirkwall's head,
 The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

"Or what will ye give my son for land,
 Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"Three girl's paces of red sand,
 The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

"Or what will ye give me for my son,
 Red rose leaves will never make wine?"

"Six times to kiss his young mouth on,
 The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

"But what have ye done with the bearing-bread,

And what have ye made with the washing-wine?

Or where have ye made your bearing-bed,
 To bear a son in the sides of Tyne?"

"The bearing-bred is soft and new,
 There is no soil in the straining wine;
 The bed was made between green and blue,
 It stands full soft by the sides of Tyne."

"The fair grass was my bearing-bread,
 The well-water my washing-wine;
 The low leaves were my bearing-bed,
 And that was best in the sides of Tyne."

"O daughter, if ye have done this thing,
 I wot the greater grief is mine;
 This was a bitter child-bearing,
 When ye were got by the sides of Tyne."

"About the time of sea-swallows
 That fly full thick by six and nine,
 Ye'll have my body out of the house,
 To bury me by the sides of Tyne."

"Set nine stones by the wall for twain,
 Red rose leaves will never make wine;
 For the bed I take will measure ten,
 The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

"Tread twelve girl's paces out for three,
 Red rose leaves will never make wine;
 For the pit I made has taken me,
 The ways are sair fra' the Till to the Tyne."

THE YEAR OF LOVE.

THERE were four loves that one by one,
 Following the seasons and the sun,
 Passed over without tears, and fell
 Away without farewell.

The first was made of gold and tears,
 The next of aspen-leaves and fears,
 The third of rose-boughs and rose-roots,
 The last love of strange fruits.

These were the four loves faded. Hold
Some minutes fast the time of gold
When our lips each way clung and clove
To a face full of love.

The tears inside our eyelids met,
Wrung forth with kissing, and wept wet
The faces cleaving each to each
Where the blood served for speech.

The second, with low patient brows
Bound under aspen-colored boughs
And eyes made strong and grave with sleep
And yet too weak to weep—

The third, with eager mouth at ease
Fed from late autumn honey, lees
Of scarce gold left in latter cells
With scattered flower-smells—

Hair sprinkled over with spoilt sweet
Of ruined roses, wrists and feet

Slight-swathed, as grassy girdled sheaves
Hold in stray poppy-leaves—

The fourth, with lips whereon has bled
Some great pale fruit's slow color, shed
From the rank bitter husk whence drips
Faint blood between her lips—

Made of the heat of whole great Junes
Burning the blue dark round their moons
(Each like a mown red marigold)
So hard the flame keeps hold—

These are burnt thoroughly away.
Only the first holds out a day
Beyond these latter loves that were
Made of mere heat and air.

And now the time is winterly
The first loves fades too: none will see,
When April warms the world anew,
The place wherein love grew.

DEDICATION.

1865.

THE sea gives her shells to the shingle,
The earth gives her streams to the sea;
They are many, but my gift is single,
My verses, the first fruits of me.
Let the wind take the green and the grey
leaf,
Cast forth without fruit upon air;
Take rose-leaf and vine-leaf and bay-leaf
Blown loose from the hair.

The night shakes them round me in legions
Dawn drives them before her like dreams;
Time sheds them like snows on strange
regions,
Swept shoreward on infinite streams;

Leaves pallid and sombre and ruddy,
Dead fruits of the fugitive years;
Some stained as with wine and made
bloody,
And some as with tears.

Some scattered in seven years' traces,
As they fell from the boy that was then;
Long left among idle green places,
Or gathered but now among men;
On seas full of wonder and peril,
Blown white round the capes of the
north;
Or in islands where myrtles are sterile
And loves bring not forth.

O daughters of dreams and of stories
 That life is not wearied of yet,
 Faustine, Fragoletta, Dolores,
 Félise and Yolande and Juliette,
 Shall I find you not still, shall I miss you,
 When sleep, that is true or that seems,
 Comes back to me hopeless to kiss you,
 O daughters of dreams.

They are past as a slumber that passes,
 As the dew of a dawn of old time;
 More frail than the shadows on glasses,
 More fleet than a wave or a rhyme.
 As the waves after ebb drawing seaward,
 When their hollows are full of the night,
 So the birds that flew singing to me-ward
 Recede out of sight.

The songs of dead seasons, that wander
 On wings of articulate words;
 Lost leaves that the shore-wind may squander,
 Light flocks of untameable birds;
 Some sang to me dreaming in class time
 And truant in hand as in tongue;
 For the youngest were born of boy's pastime,
 The eldest are young.

Is there shelter while life in them lingers,
 Is there hearing for songs that recede,
 Tunes touched from a harp with men's fingers
 Or blown with boy's mouth in a reed ?
 Is there place in the land of your labor,
 Is there room in your world of delight,
 Where change has not sorrow for neighbor
 And day has not night ?

In their wings though the sea-wind yet
 quivers,
 Will you spare not a space for them there
 Made green with the running of rivers
 And gracious with temperate air;
 In the fields and the turreted cities,
 That cover from sunshine and rain
 Fair passions and bountiful pities
 And loves without stain ?

In a land of clear colors and stories,
 In a region of shadowless hours,
 Where earth has a garment of glories
 And a murmur of musical flowers;
 In woods where the spring half uncovers
 The flush of her amorous face,
 By the waters that listen for lovers.
 For these is there place ?

For the song-birds of sorrow, that muffle
 Their music as clouds do their fire:
 For the storm-birds of passion, that ruffle
 Wild wings in a wind of desire;
 In the stream of the storm as it settles
 Blown seaward, borne far from the sun,
 Shaken loose on the darkness like petals
 Dropt one after one ?

Though the world of your hands be more
 gracious
 And lovelier in lordship of things
 Clothed round by sweet art with the
 spacious
 Warm heaven of her imminent wings,
 Let them enter, unfledged and nigh fainting,
 For the love of old loves and lost times;
 And receive in your palace of painting
 This revel of rhymes.

Though the seasons of man full of losses
 Make empty the years full of youth,
 If but one thing be constant in crosses,
 Change lays not her hand upon truth;
 Hopes die, and their tombs are for token
 That the grief as the joy of them ends
 Ere time that breaks all men has broken
 The faith between friends.

Though the many lights dwindle to one
 light,
 There is help if the heaven has one;
 Though the skies be disrowned of the
 sunlight
 And the earth dispossessed of the sun,
 They have moonlight and sleep for repay-
 ment,
 When, refreshed as a bride and set free
 With stars and sea-winds in her raiment,
 Night sinks on the sea.

SONGS OF TWO NATIONS.

I. A SONG OF ITALY.

II. ODE ON THE PROCLAMATION OF THE
FRENCH REPUBLIC.

III. DIRÆ.

*I saw the double-featured statue stand
Of Memnon or of Janus, half with night
veiled, and fast bound with iron; half with light
Crowned, holding all men's future in his hand.*

*And all the old westward face of time grown grey
Was writ with cursing and inscribed for death
But on the face that met the morning's breath
Fear died of hope as darkness dies of day.*

INSCRIBED

WITH ALL DEVOTION AND REVERENCE

TO

JOSEPH MAZZINI

A SONG OF ITALY.

UPON a windy night of stars that fell
At the wind's spoken spell,
Swept with sharp strokes of agonizing
light

From the clear gulf of night,
Between the fixed and fallen glories one
Against my vision shone,
More fair and fearful and divine than they

That measure night and day,
And worthier worship; and within mine
eyes

The formless folded skies
Took shape and were unfolded like as
flowers.

And I beheld the hours
As maidens, and the days as laboring men,
And the soft nights again
As wearied women to their own souls wed,
And ages as the dead.

And over these living, and them that died,
From one to the other side

A lordlier light than comes of earth or air
Made the world's future fair.

A woman like to love in face, but not
A thing of transient lot—

And like to hope, but having hold on
truth—

And like to joy or youth,
Save that upon the rock her feet were
set—

And like what men forget,
Faith, innocence, high thought, laborious
peace—

And yet like none of these,
Being not as these are mortal, but with
eyes

That sounded the deep skies
And clove like wings or arrows their clear
way

Through night and dawn and day—

So fair a presence over star and sun

Stood, making these as one.

For in the shadow of her shape were all

Darkened and held in thrall,

So mightier rose she past them; and I felt

Whose form, whose likeness knelt

With covered hair and face and clasped
her knees;

And knew the first of these
Was Freedom, and the second Italy.

And what sad words said she
For mine own grief I knew not, nor had
heart

Therewith to bear my part
And set my songs to sorrow; nor to hear
How tear by sacred tear
Fell from her eyes as flowers or notes that
fall

In some slain feaster's hall
Where in mid music and melodious breath
Men singing have seen death.

So fair, so lost, so sweet she knelt; or so

In our lost eyes below
Seemed to us sorrowing; and her speech
being said,

Fell, as one who falls dead.

And for a little she too wept, who stood

Above the dust and blood
And thrones and troubles of the world;
then spake,

As who bids dead men wake.

'Because the years were heavy on thy
head;

Because dead things are dead;
Because thy chosen on hill-side, city and
plain

Are shed as drops of rain;
Because all earth was black, all heaven
was blind,

And we cast out of mind;
Because men wept, saying *Freedom*, know-
ing of thee,

Child, that thou wast not free:
Because wherever blood was not shame was
Where thy pure foot did pass;

Because on Promethean rocks distent

Thee fouler eagles rent;

Because a serpent stains with slime and
foam

This that is not thy Rome;

Child of my womb, whose limbs were made
in me,

Have I forgotten thee?

In all thy dreams through all these years
on wing,

Hast thou dreamed such a thing?
 The mortal mother-bird outsoars her nest,
 The child outgrows the breast;
 But suns as stars shall fall from heaven and
 cease,
 Ere we twain be as these;
 Yea, utmost skies forget their utmost sun,
 Ere we twain be not one.
 My lesser jewels sewn on skirt and hem,
 I have no heed of them
 Obscured and flawed by sloth or craft or
 power;
 But thou, that wast my flower,
 The blossom bound between my brows and
 worn
 In sight of even and morn
 From the last ember of the flameless west
 To the dawn's baring breast—
 I were not Freedom if thou wert not free,
 Nor thou wert Italy.
 O mystic rose ingrained with blood, im-
 pearled
 With tears of all the world !
 The torpor of their blind brute-ridden
 trance
 Kills England and chills France;
 And Spain sobs hard through strangling
 blood; and snows
 Hide the huge eastern woes.
 But thou, twin-born with morning, nursed
 of noon,
 And blessed of star and moon !
 What shall avail to assail thee any more,
 From sacred shore to shore ?
 Have Time and Love not knelt down at
 thy feet,
 Thy sore, thy soiled, thy sweet,
 Fresh from the flints and mire of murderous
 ways
 And dust of travelling days ?
 Hath Time not kissed them, Love not
 washed them fair,
 And wiped with tears and hair ?
 Though God forget thee, I will not forget;
 Though heaven and earth be set
 Against thee, O unconquerable child,
 Abused, abased, reviled,
 Lift thou not less from no funereal bed
 Thine undishonored head;
 Love thou not less, by lips of thine once
 prest,
 This my now barren breast;
 Seek thou not less, being well assured
 thereof,
 O child, my latest love.

For now the barren bosom shall bear fruit,
 Songs leap from lips long mute,
 And with my milk the mouths of nations
 fed
 Again be glad and red
 That were worn white with hunger and
 sorrow and thirst;
 And thou, most fair and first,
 Thou whose warm hands and sweet live
 lips I feel
 Upon me for a seal,
 Thou whose least looks, whose smiles and
 little sighs,
 Whose passionate pure eyes,
 Whose dear fair limbs that neither bonds
 could bruise
 Nor hate of men misuse,
 Whose flower-like breath and bosom, O my
 child,
 O mine and undefiled,
 Fill with such tears as burn like bitter
 wine
 These mother's eyes of mine,
 Thrill with huge passions and primeval
 pains
 The fulness of my veins.
 O sweetest head seen higher than any
 stands,
 I touch thee with mine hands,
 I lay my lips upon thee, O thou most
 sweet,
 To lift thee on thy feet
 And with the fire of mine to fill thine eyes;
 I say unto thee, Arise.'

She ceased, and heaven was full of flame
 and sound,
 And earth's old limbs unbound
 Shone and waxed warm with fiery dew and
 seed
 Shed through her at this her need;
 And highest in heaven, a mother and full
 of grace,
 With no more covered face,
 With no more lifted hands and bended
 knees,
 Rose, as from sacred seas
 Love, when old time was full of plenteous
 springs,
 That fairest-born of things,
 The land that holds the rest in tender
 thrall
 For love's sake in them all,
 That binds with words and holds with eyes
 and hands

All hearts in all men's lands.

So died the dream whence rose the live desire

That here takes form and fire,
A spirit from the splendid grave of sleep
Risen, that ye should not weep,
Should not weep more nor ever, O ye that hear

And ever have held her dear,
Seeing now indeed she weeps not who wept sore,

And sleeps not any more.
Hearken ye towards her, O people exalt your eyes;

Is this a thing that dies?

Italia! by the passion of the pain

That bent and rent thy chain;

Italia! by the breaking of the bands,

The shaking of the lands;

Beloved, O men's mother, O men's queen,

Arise, appear, be seen!

Arise, array thyself in manifold

Queen's raiment of wrought gold;

With girdles of green freedom, and with red

Roses, and white snow shed
Above the flush and frontage of the hills

That all thy deep dawn fills

And all thy clear night veils and warms
with wings

Spread till the morning sings;

The rose of resurrection, and the bright

Breast lavish of the light,

The lady lily like the snowy sky

Ere the stars wholly die;

As red as blood, and whiter than a wave

Flowers grown as from thy grave,

From the green fruitful grass in Maytime
hot,

Thy grave, where thou art not.

Gather the grass and weave, in sacred
sign

Of the ancient earth divine,

The holy heart of things, the seed of
birth,

The mystical warm earth.

O thou her flower of flowers, with tress
braid

Be thy sweet head arrayed,

In witness of her mighty motherhood

Who bore thee and found thee good,

Her fairest-born of children, on whose
head

Her green and white and red

Are hope and light and life, inviolate
Of any latter fate.

Fly, O our flag, through deep Italian
air,

Above the flags that were,
The dusty shreds of shameful battle-flags

Trampled and rent in rags,
As withering woods in autumn's bitterest
breath

Yellow, and black as death;
Black as crushed worms that sicken in the
sense,

And yellow as pestilence.
Fly, green as summer and red as dawn and
white

As the live heart of light,
The blind bright womb of color unborn,
that brings

Forth all fair forms of things,
As freedom all fair forms of nations dyed
In divers-colored pride.

Fly, fleet as wind on every wind that blows
Between her seas and snows,

From Alpine white, from Tuscan green,
and where

Vesuvius reddens air.

Fly! and let all men see it, and all kings
wail,

And priests wax faint and pale,
And the cold hordes that moan in misty
places

And the funereal races
And the sick serfs of lands that wait and
wane

See thee and hate thee in vain.

In the clear laughter of all winds and
waves,

In the blown grass of graves,
In the long sound of fluctuant boughs of
trees,

In the broad breath of seas,
Bid the sound of thy flying folds be
heard;

And as a spoken word
Full of that fair god and that merciless

Who rends the Pythoness,
So be the sound and so the fire that saith

She feels her ancient breath
And the old blood move in her immortal
veins.

Strange travail and strong pains,
Our mother, hast thou borne these many
years

While thy pure blood and tears

Mixed with the Tyrrhene and the Adrian
sea;

Light things were said of thee,
As of one buried deep among the dead;
Yea, she hath been, they said,
She was when time was younger, and is
not;

The very cerecloths rot
That flutter in the dusty wind of death,
Not moving with her breath;
Far seasons and forgotten years enfold
Her dead corpse old and cold
With many windy winters and pale
springs:

She is none of this world's things.
Though her dead head like a live garland
wear

The golden-growing hair
That flows over her breast down to her
feet,

Dead queens, whose life was sweet
In sight of all men living, have been
found

So cold, so clad, so crowned,
With all things faded and with one thing
fair,

Their old immortal hair,
When flesh and bone turned dust at touch
of day:

And she is dead as they.

So men said sadly, mocking; so the slave,
Whose life was his soul's grave:
So, pale or red with change of fast and
feast,

The sanguine-sandalled priest
So the Austrian, when his fortune came to
flood,

And the warm wave was blood;
With wings that widened and with beak
that smote,

So shrieked through either throat
From the hot horror of its northern nest
That double-headed pest;

So, triple-crowned with fear and fraud and
shame,

He of whom treason came,
The herdsman of the Gadarean swine;

So all his ravening kine,
Made fat with poisonous pasture; so not
we,

Mother, beholding thee.
Make answer, O the crown of all our
slain,

Ye that were one, being twain,

Twain brethren, twin-born to the second
birth,

Chosen out of all our earth
To be the prophesying stars that say
How hard is night on day,
Stars in serene and sudden heaven risen
Before the sun break prison
And ere the moon be wasted; fair first
flowers

In that red wreath of ours
Woven with the lives of all whose lives
were shed

To crown their mother's head
With leaves of civic cypress and thick
yew,

Till the olive bind it too,
Olive and laurel and all loftier leaves
That victory wears or weaves

At her fair feet for her beloved brow;
Hear, for she too hears now,
O Pisacane, from Calabrian sands;
O all heroic hands

Close on the sword-hilt, hands of all her
dead;

O many a holy head,
Bowed for her sake even to her reddening
dust;

O chosen, O pure and just,
Who counted for a small thing life's estate,
And died, and made it great;

Ye whose names mix with all her memo-
ries; ye

Who rather chose to see
Death, than our more intolerable things;
Thou whose name withers kings,

Agésilao; thou too, O chieftiest thou,
The slayer of splendid brow,
Laid where the lying lips of fear deride

The foiled tyrannicide,
Foiled, fallen, slain, scorned, and happy;
being in fame,

Felice, like thy name,
Not like thy fortune; father of the fight,
Having in hand our light.

Ah, happy! for that sudden-swerving
hand

Flung light on all thy land,
Yea, lit blind France with compulsory
ray,

Driven down a righteous way;
Ah, happiest! for from thee the wars be-
gan,

From thee the fresh springs ran;
From thee the lady land that queens the
earth

Gat as she gave new birth,

O sweet mute mouths, O all fair dead of
ours,
Fair in our eyes as flowers,
Fair without feature, vocal without voice,
Strong without strength, rejoice !
Hear it with ears that hear not, and on
eyes

That see not let it rise,
Rise as a sundawn; be it as dew that
drips

On dumb and dusty lips;
Eyes have ye not, and see it; neither ears,
And there is none but hears.

This is the same for whom ye bled and
wept;

She was not dead, but slept.
This is that very Italy which was
And is and shall not pass.

But thou, though all were not well done,
O chief,

Must thou take shame or grief ?
Because one man is not as thou or ten,
Must thou take shame for men ?
Because the supreme sunrise is not yet,
Is the young dew not wet ?

Wilt thou not yet abide a little while,
Soul without fear or guile,

Mazzini,—O our prophet, O our priest,
A little while at least ?

A little hour of doubt and of control,
Sustain thy sacred soul;
Withhold thine heart, our father, but an
hour;

Is it not here, the flower,
Is it not blown and fragrant from the root,
And shall not be the fruit ?

Thy children, even thy people thou hast
made,

Thine, with thy words arrayed,
Clothed with thy thoughts and girt with
thy desires,

Yearn up toward thee as fires.
Art thou not father, O father, of all these ?
From thine own Genoese

To where of nights the lower extreme
lagoon

Feels its Venetian moon,
Nor suckling's mouth nor mother's breast
set free

But hath that grace through thee.
The milk of life on death's unnatural brink

Thou gavest them to drink,
The natural milk of freedom; and again

They drank, and they were men.

The wine and honey of freedom and of
faith

They drank, and cast off death.
Bear with them now; thou art holier: yet
endure,

Till they as thou be pure.
Their swords at least that stemmed half
Austria's tide

Bade all its bulk divide;
Else, though fate bade them for a breath's
space fall,

She had not fallen at all.
Not by their hands they made time's
promise true;

Not by their hands, but through.
Nor on Custoza ran their blood to waste,
Nor fell their fame defaced

Whom stormiest Adria with tumultuous
tides

Whirls undersea and hides.
Not his, who from the sudden-settling
deck

Looked over death and wreck
To where the mother's bosom shone, who
smiled

As he, so dying, her child;
For he smiled surely, dying, to mix his
death

With her memorial breath;
Smiled, being most sure of her, that in no
wise,

Die whoso will, she dies:
And she smiled surely, fair and far above,
Wept not, but smiled for love.

Thou too, O splendor of the sudden
sword

That drove the crews abhorred
From Naples and the siren-footed strand
Flash from thy master's hand
Shine from the middle summer of the
seas

To the old Æolides,
Outshine their fiery fumes of burning
night,

Sword, with thy midday light;
Flame as a beacon from the Tyrrhene
foam

To the rent heart of Rome,
From the island of her lover and thy lord,
Her saviour and her sword,

In the fierce year of failure and of fame,
Art thou not yet the same
That wast as lightning swifter than all
wings

In the blind face of kings ?

When priests took counsel to devise despair,

And princes to forswear,
She clasped thee, O her sword and flag-bearer

And staff and shield to her,
O Garibaldi; need was hers and grief,
Of thee and of the chief,
And of another girt in arms to stand
As good of hope and hand,
As high of soul and happy, albeit indeed
The heart should burn and bleed,
So but the spirit shake not nor the breast
Swerve, but abide its rest.
As theirs did and as thine, though ruin clomb

The highest wall of Rome,
Though treason stained and spilt her lustral water,

And slaves led slaves to slaughter,
And priests, praying and slaying, watched them pass

From a strange France, alas,
That was not freedom; yet when these were past,

Thy sword and thou stood fast,
Till new men seeing thee where Sicilian waves

Hear now no sound of slaves,
And where thy sacred blood is fragrant still
Upon the Bitter Hill,
Seeing by that blood one country saved and stained,

Less loved thee crowned than chained,
And less now only than the chief: for he,
Father of Italy,

Uppore in holy hands the babe new-born
Through loss and sorrow and scorn,
Of no man led, of many men reviled;

Till lo, the new-born child
Gone from between his hands, and in its place,

Lo, the fair mother's face.
Blessed is he of all men, being in one
As father to her and son,

Blessed of all men living, that he found
Her weak limbs bared and bound,
And in his arms and in his bosom bore,
And as a garment wore
Her weight of want, and as a royal dress
Put on her weariness.

As in faith's hoariest histories men read,
The strong man bore at need
Through roaring rapids when all heaven
was wild

The likeness of a child
That still waxed greater and heavier as he trod,

And altered, and was God.
Praise him, O winds that move the molten air,

O light of days that were,
And light of days that shall be; land and sea,

And heaven and Italy:
Praise him, O storm and summer, shore and wave,

O skies and every grave;
O weeping hopes, O memories beyond tears,

O many and murmuring years,
O sounds far off in time and visions far,
O sorrow with thy star;

And joy with all thy beacons; ye that mourn,

And ye whose light is born;
O fallen faces, and O souls arisen,
Praise him from tomb and prison,

Praise him from heaven and sunlight; and ye floods,
And windy waves of woods;

Ye valleys and wild vineyards, ye lit lakes
And happier hillsides brakes,
Untrampled by the cursed feet that trod

Fields golden from their god,
Fields of their god forsaken, whereof none
Sees his face in the sun,

Hears his voice from the floweriest wilderness;

And, barren of his tresses,
Ye bays unplucked and laurels unentwined,

That no men break or bind,
And myrtles long forgetful of the sword,
And olives unadored,

Wisdom and love, white hands that save and slay,

Praise him; and ye as they,
Praise him, O gracious might of dews and rains

That feed the purple plains,
O sacred sunbeams bright as bare steel drawn,

O cloud and fire and dawn;
Red hills of flame, white Alps, green Apennines,

Banners of blowing pines,
Standards of stormy snows, flags of light leaves,

Three wherewith Freedom weaves

One ensign that once woven and once unfurled

Makes day of all a world,
Makes blind their eyes who knew not, and
outbraves

The waste of iron waves;
Ye fields of yellow fullness, ye fresh fountains,

And mists of many mountains;
Ye moons and seasons, and ye days and
nights;

Ye starry-headed heights,
And gorges melting sunward from the
snow,

And all strong streams that flow,
Tender as tears, and fair as faith, and
pure

As hearts made sad and sure
At once by many sufferings and one love;
O mystic deathless dove

Held to the heart of earth and in her
hands

Cherished, O hily of lands,
White rose of time, dear dream of praises
past—

For such as these thou wast,
That art as eagles setting to the sun,
As fawns that leap and run,

As a sword carven with keen floral gold,
Sword for an armed god's hold,
Flower for a crowned god's forehead—O
our land,

Reach forth thine holiest hand,
O mother of many sons and memories,
Stretch out thine hand to his
That raised and gave thee life to run and
leap

When thou wast full of sleep,
That touched and stung thee with young
blood and breath

When thou wast hard on death.
Praise him, O all her cities and her crowns,
Her towers and thrones of towns;
O noblest Brescia, scarred from foot to
head

And breast-deep in the dead,
Praise him from all the glories of the graves
That yellow Mela laves
With gentle and golden water, whose fair
flood

Ran wider with thy blood :
Praise him, O born of that heroic breast,
O nursed thereat and blest,
Verona, fairer than thy mother fair,
But not more brave to bear :

Praise him, O Milan, whose imperial tread
Bruised once the German head ;
Whose might, by northern swords left
desolate,

Set foot on fear and fate :
Praise him, O long mute mouth of melodies,
Mantua, with louder keys,
With mightier chords of music even than
rolled

From the large harps of old,
When thy sweet singer of golden throat and
tongue,

Praising his tyrant, sung ;
Though now thou sing not as of other days,
Learn late a better praise.

Not with the sick sweet lips of slaves that
sing,

Praise thou no priest or king,
No brow-bound laurel of discoloured leaf,
But him, the crownless chief.

Praise him, O star of sun-forgotten times,
Among their creeds and crimes

That wast a fire of witness in the night,
Padua, the wise men's light :

Praise him, O sacred Venice, and the sea
That now exults through thee,
Full of the mighty morning and the sun,
Free of thrifs dead and done ;

Praise him from all the years of thy great
grief,

That shook thee like a leaf
With winds and snows of torment, rain that
fell

Red as the rains of hell,
Storms of black thunder and of yellow flame,
And all ill things but shame ;

Praise him with all thy holy heart and
strength ;

Through thy walls' breadth and length
Praise him with all thy people, that their
voice

Bid the strong soul rejoice,
The fair clear supreme spirit beyond stain,
Pure as the depth of pain,
High as the head of suffering, and secure
As all things that endure.

More than thy blind lord of an hundred
years

Whose name our memory hears,
Home-bound from harbours of the Byzantine
Made tributary of thine,

Praise him who gave no gifts from oversea,
But gave thyself to thee.

O mother Genoa, through all years that run,
More than that other son,

Who first beyond the seas of sunset prest
Even to the unfooted west,
Whose black-blown flag scared from their
sheltering seas

The unknown Atlantides,
And as flame climbs through cloud and
vapour clomb

Through streams of storm and foam,
Till half in sight they saw land heave and
swim—

More than this man praise him.

One found a world new-born from virgin
sea ;

And one found Italy.

O heavenliest Florence, from the mouths of
flowers

Fed by melodious hours,

From each sweet mouth that kisses light
and air,

Thou whom thy fate made fair,

As a bound vine or any flowering tree,

Praise him who made thee free.

For no grape-gatherers trampling out the
wine

Tread thee, the fairest vine ;

For no man binds thee, no man bruises,
none

Does with thee as these have done.

From where spring hears loud through ner
long lit vales

Triumphant nightingales,

In many a fold of fiery foliage hidden.

Withheld as things forbidden,

But clamorous with innumerable delight

In May's red, green, and white,

In the far-floated standard of the spring,

That bids men also sing,

Our flower of flags, our witness that are
free,

Our lamp for land and sea ;

From where Majano feels through corn and
vine

Spring move and melt as wine,

And Fiesole's embracing arms enclose

The immeasurable rose ;

From hill-sides plumed with pine, and
heights wind-worn

That feel the reflux morn,

Or where the moon's face warm and
passionate

Burns, and men's hearts grow great,

And the swollen eyelids labor with sweet
tears,

And in their burning ears

Sound throbs like flame, and in their eyes
new light

Kindles the trembling night ;

From faint illumined fields and starry valleys

Wherefrom the hill-wind sallies,

From Valombrosa, from Valdarno raise

One Tuscan tune of praise.

O lordly city of the field of death,

Praise him with equal breath,

From sleeping streets and gardens, and the
stream

That threads them as a dream

Threads without light the untravelled ways
of sleep

With eyes that smile or weep ;

From the sweet sombre beauty of wave and
wall

That fades and does not fall ;

From colored domes and cloisters fair
with fame,

Praise thou and thine his name.

Thou too, O little laurelled town of towers,

Clothed with the flame of flowers,

From windy ramparts girdled with young
gold,

From thy sweet hill-side fold

Of wallflowers and the acacia's belted
bloom

And every blowing plume,

Halls that saw Dante speaking, chapels
fair

As the outer hills and air,

Praise him who feeds the fire that Dante
fed,

Our highest heroic head,

Whose eyes behold through floated cloud
and flame

The maiden face of fame

Like April's in Valdelsa ; fair as flowers,
And patient as the hours ;

Sad with slow sense of time, and bright
with faith

That levels life and death ;

The final fame, that with a foot sublime

Treads down reluctant time ;

The fame that waits and watches and is
wise,

A virgin with chaste eyes,

A goddess who takes hands with great
men's grief ;

Praise her, and him, our chief.

Praise him, O Siena, and thou her deep
green spring,

O Fonte Branda, sing :

Shout from the red clefts of thy fiery crags,
 Shake out thy flying flags
 In the long wind that streams from hill to hill ;
 Bid thy full music fill
 The desolate red waste of sunset air
 And fields the old time saw fair,
 But now the hours ring void through
 ruined lands,
 Wild work of mortal hands ;
 Yet through thy dead Maremma let his
 name
 Take flight and pass in flame,
 And the red ruin of disastrous hours
 Shall quicken into flowers.
 Praise him, O fiery child of sun and sea,
 Naples, who bade thee be ;
 For till he sent the swords that scourge
 and save,
 Thou was not, but thy grave.
 But more than all these praise him and
 give thanks,
 Thou, from thy Tiber's banks,
 From all thine hills and from thy supreme
 dome,
 Praise him, O risen Rome.
 Let all thy children cities at thy knee
 Lift up their voice with thee,
 Saying 'for thy love's sake and our per-
 ished grief
 We laud thee, O our chief ;'
 Saying 'for thine hand and help when
 hope was dead
 We thank thee, O our head ;'
 Saying 'for thy voice and face within our
 sight
 We bless thee, O our light ;
 For waters cleansing us from days defiled
 We praise thee, O our child.

So with an hundred cities' mouths in one
 Praising thy supreme son,
 Son of thy sorrow, O mother, O maid and
 mother,
 Our queen, who serve none other,
 Our lady of pity and mercy, and full of grace,
 Turn elsewhere thy face,
 Turn for a little and look what things are
 these
 Now fallen before thy knees ;
 Turn upon them thine eyes who hated
 thee,
 Behold what things they be,
 Italia: these are stubble that were steel,
 Dust, or a turning wheel ;

As leaves, as snow, as sand, that were so
 strong ;
 And howl, for all their song,
 And wail, for all their wisdom ; they that
 were
 So great, they are all stript bare,
 They are made empty of beauty, and all
 abhorred ;
 They are shivered, and their sword ;
 They are slain who slew, they are heart-
 less who were wise ;
 Yea, turn on these thine eyes,
 O thou, soliciting with soul sublime
 The obscure soul of time,
 Thou, with the wounds thy holy body
 bears
 From broken swords of theirs,
 Thou, with the sweet swoln eyelids that
 have bled
 Tears for thy thousands dead,
 And upon these, whose swords drank up
 like dew
 The sons of thine they slew,
 These, whose each gun blasted with mur-
 dering mouth
 Live flowers of thy fair south,
 These, whose least evil told in alien ears
 Turned men's whole blood to tears,
 These, whose least sin remembered for
 pure shame
 Turned all those tears to flame,
 Even upon these, when breaks the extreme
 blow
 And all the world cries woe,
 When heaven reluctant rains long-suffering
 fire
 On these and their desire,
 When his wind shakes them and his waters
 whelm
 Who rent thy robe and realm,
 When they that poured thy dear blood
 forth as wine
 Pour forth their own for thine,
 On these, on these have mercy : not in
 hate,
 But full of sacred fate,
 Strong from the shrine and splendid from
 the god,
 Smite, with no second rod.
 Because they spared not, do thou rather
 spare :
 Be not one thing they were.
 Let not one tongue of theirs who hate thee
 say
 That thou wast even as they.

Because their hands were bloody, be thine
white ;
Show light where they shed night :
Because they are foul, be thou the rather
pure ;
Because they are feeble, endure ;
Because they had no pity, have thou pity.

And thou, O supreme city,
O priestless Rome that shalt be, take in trust
Their names, their deeds, their dust,
Who held life less than thou wert ; be the
least

To thee indeed a priest,
Priest and burnt-offering and blood-sacri-
fice

Given without prayer or price,
A holier immolation than men wist,
A costlier eucharist,
A sacrament more saving ; bend thine head
Above these many dead
Once, and salute with thine eternal eyes
Their lowest head that lies.

Speak from thy lips of immemorial speech
If but one word for each.

Kiss but one kiss on each thy dead son's
mouth

Fallen dumb or north or south.
And laying but once thine hand on brow
and breast,

Bless them, through whom thou art
blest.

And saying in ears of these thy dead ' Well
done,

Shall they not hear ' O son ' ?
And bowing thy face to theirs made pale
for thee,

Shall the shut eyes not see ?
Yea, through the hollow-hearted world of
death,

As light, as blood, as breath,
Shall there not flash and flow the fiery
sense,

The pulse of prescience ?
Shall not these know as in times overpast
Thee loftiest to the last ?

For times and wars shall change, kingdoms
and creeds,

And dreams of men, and deeds ;
Earth shall grow grey with all her golden
things,

Pale peoples and hoar kings ;
But though her thrones and towers of
nations fall,

Death has no part in all ;

In the air, nor in the imperishable sea,
Nor heaven, nor truth, nor thee.
Yea, let all sceptre-stricken nations lie,
But live thou though they die ;
Let their flags fade as flowers that storm
can mar,

But thine be like a star ;
Let England's, if it float not for men flee,
Fall, and forget the sea ;
Let France's, if it shadow a hateful head,
Drop as a leaf drops dead ;
Thine let what storm soever smite the rest
Smite as it seems him best ;
Thine let the wind that can, by sea or
land,

Wrest from thy banner-hand.
Die they in whom dies freedom, die and
cease,

Though the world weep for these ;
Live thou and love and lift when these lie
dead
The green and white and red.

O our Republic that shalt bind in bands
The kingdomless far lands
And link the chainless ages ; thou that
wast

With England ere she past
Among the faded nations, and shalt be
Again, when sea to sea
Calls through the wind and light of morn-
ing time,

And throneless clime to clime
Makes antiphonal answer ; thou that art
Where one man's perfect heart
Burns, one man's brow is brightened for
thy sake,

Thine, strong to make or break ;
O fair Republic hallowing with stretched
hands

The limitless free lands,
When all men's heads for love, not fear,
bow down

To thy sole royal crown,
As thou to freedom ; when man's life
smells sweet ;

And at thy bright swift feet
A bloodless and a bondless world is laid ;
Then, when thy men are made,

Let these indeed as we in dreams behold
One chosen of all thy fold,
One of all fair things fairest, one exalt
Above all fear or fault,

One unforgetful of unhappier men
And us who loved her then ;

With eyes that outlook suns and dream on
 graves ;
 With voice like quiring waves ;
 With heart the holier for their memories'
 sake
 Who slept that she might wake ;
 With breast the sweeter for that sweet
 blood lost,
 And all the milkless cost ;
 Lady of earth, whose large equality
 Bends but to her and thee ;
 Equal with heaven, and infinite of years,

And splendid from quenched tears ;
 Strong with old strength of great things
 fallen and fled,
 Diviner for her dead ;
 Chaste of all stains and perfect from all
 scars,
 Above all storms and stars,
 All winds that blow through time, all
 waves that foam,
 Our Capitoline Rome.
 1867.

ODE ON PROCLAMATION OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

SEPTEMBER 4TH, 1870.

À VICTOR HUGO.

αἴλινον αἴλινον εἶπὲ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω

STROPHE 1.

With songs and crying and sound of ac-
 clamations,
 Lo, the flame risen, the fire that falls in
 showers !
 Hark ; for the word is out among the na-
 tions :
 Look ; for the light is up upon the hour ;
 O fears, O shames, O many tribulations,
 Yours were all yesterdays, but this day
 ours.
 Strong were your bonds linked fast with
 lamentations,
 With groans and tears built into walls
 and towers :
 Strong were your works and wonders of
 high stations,
 Your forts blood-based, and rampires of
 your powers :
 Lo now the last of divers desolations,
 The hand of time, that gathers hosts like
 flowers :
 Time, that fills up and pours out generations ;
 Time, at whose breath confounded empire
 cowers.

STR. 2.

What are these moving in the dawn's
 red gloom ?
 What is she waited on by dread and
 doom,
 Ill ministers of morning, bondsmen born of
 night ?
 If that head veiled and bowed be morn-
 ing's head,
 If she come walking between doom and
 dread,
 Who shall rise up with song and dance
 before her sight ?
 Are not the night's dead heaped about
 her feet ?
 Is not death swollen, and slaughter full
 of meat ?
 What, is their feast a bride-feast, where
 men sing and dance ?
 A bitter, a bitter bride-song and a shrill
 Should the house raise that such bride-
 followers fill,
 Wherein defeat weds ruin, and takes for
 bride-bed France.

For nineteen years deep shame and sore
 desire
 Fed from men's hearts with hungering
 fangs of fire,
 And hope fell sick with famine for the food
 of change.
 Now is change come, but bringing funeral
 urns ;
 Now is day nigh, but the dawn blinds
 and burns ;
 Now time long dumb hath language, but
 the tongue is strange.

We that have seen her not our whole
 lives long,
 We to whose ears her dirge was cradle-
 song,
 The dirge men sang who laid in earth her
 living head,
 Is it by such light that we live to see
 Rise, with rent hair and raiment, Liberty?
 Does her grave open only to restore her
 dead ?

Ah, was it this we looked for, looked
 and prayed,
 This hour that treads upon the prayers
 we made,
 This ravening hour that breaks down good
 and ill alike ?
 Ah, was it thus we thought to see her
 and hear,
 The one love indivisible and dear ?
 Is it her head that hands which strike down
 wrong must strike ?

STR. 3.

Where is hope, and promise where, in all
 these things,
 Shocks of strength with strength, and jar
 of hurtling kings ?
 Who of all men, who will show us any
 good ?
 Shall these lightnings of blind battles give
 men light ?
 Where is freedom ? who will bring us in
 her sight,
 That have hardly seen her footprint where
 she stood ?

STR. 4.

Who is this that rises red with wounds and
 splendid,
 All her breast and brow made beautiful
 with scars,

Burning bare as naked daylight, undefended,
 In her hands for spoils her splintered
 prison-bars,
 In her eyes the light and fire of long pain
 ended,
 In her lips a song as of the morning
 stars ?

STR. 5.

O torn out of thy trance,
 O deathless, O my France,
 O many-wounded mother, O redeemed to
 reign !
 O rarely sweet and bitter
 The bright brief tears that glitter
 That wash the stains of years
 White as the names immortal of thy chosen
 and slain.
 O loved so much so long,
 O smitten with such wrong,
 O purged at last and perfect without spot
 or stain,
 Light of the light of man,
 Reborn republican,
 At last, O first Republic, hailed in heaven
 again !
 Out of the obscene eclipse
 Re-risen, with burning lips
 To witness for us if we looked for thee in
 vain.

STR. 6.

Thou wast the light whereby men saw
 Light, thou the trumpet of the law
 Proclaiming manhood to mankind ;
 And what if all these years were blind
 And shameful ? hath the sun a flaw
 Because one hour hath power to draw
 Mist round him wreathed as links to
 bind ?
 And what if now keen anguish drains
 The very wellspring of thy veins
 And very spirit of thy breath ?
 The life outlives them and disdains ;
 The sense which makes the soul remains,
 And blood of thought which travaileth
 To bring forth hope with procreant pains
 O thou that satest bound in chains
 Between thine hills and pleasant plains
 As whom his own soul vanquisheth,
 Held in the bonds of his own thought,
 Whence verily death can take off nought,

Nor sleep, with bitterer dreams than death,—

What though thy thousands at thy knees
Lie thick as grave-worms feed on these,
Though thy green fields and joyous places
Are populous with blood-blackening faces
And wan limbs eaten by the sun ?

Better an end of all men's races,
Better the world's whole work were done,

And life wiped out of all our traces,
And there were left to time not one,
Than such as these that fill thy graves
Should sow in slaves the seed of slaves.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Not of thy sons, O mother many-wounded,
Not of thy sons are slaves ingrafted and grown.

Was it not thine, the fire whence light rebounded
From kingdom on rekindling kingdom thrown,

From hearts confirmed on tyrannies confounded,
From earth on heaven, fire mightier than his own ?

Not thine the breath wherewith time's clarion sounded,

And all the terror in the trumpet blown ?
The voice whereat the thunders stood astounded

As at a new sound of a God unknown ?
And all the seas and shores within them bounded

Shook at the strange speech of thy lips alone,

And all the hills of heaven, the storm-surrounded,

Trembled, and all the night sent forth a groan.

ANT. 2.

What hast thou done that such an hour should be
More than another clothed with blood to thee ?

Thou hast seen many a bloodred hour before this one.

What art thou that thy lovers should misdoubt ?

What is this hour that it should cast hope out ?

If hope turn back and fall from thee, what hast thou done ?

Thou hast done ill against thine own soul ; yea,

Thine own soul hast thou slain and burnt away,

Dissolving it with poison into foul thinfume.

Thine own life and creation of thy fate

Thou hast set thy hand to unmake and discreate ;

And now thy slain soul rises between dead and doom.

Yea, this is she that comes between them led ;

That veiled head is thine own soul's buried head,

The head that was as morning's in the whole world's sight.

These wounds are deadly on thee, but deadlier

Those wounds the ravenous poison left on her ;

How shall her weak hands hold thy weak hands up to fight ?

Ah, but her fiery eyes, her eyes are these
That gazing, make thee shiver to the knees

And the blood leap within thee, and the strong joy rise.

What, doth her sight yet make thine heart to dance ?

O France, O freedom, O the soul of France,

Are ye then quickened, gazing in each other's eyes ?

Ah, and her words, the words wherewith she sought thee

Sorrowing, and bare in hand the robe she wrought thee

To wear when soul and body were again made one,

And fairest among women, and a bride,
Sweet-voiced to sing the bridegroom to her side,

The spirit of man, the bridegroom brighter than the sun !

ANT. 3.

Who shall help me ? who shall take me by the hand ?

Who shall teach mine eyes to see, my feet to stand,

Now my foes have stripped and wounded me by night ?

Who shall heal me? who shall come to
take my part?

Who shall set me as a seal upon his heart,
As a seal upon his arm made bare for
fight?

ANT. 4.

If thou know not, O thou fairest among
women,

If thou see not where the signs of him
abide,

Lift thine eyes up to the light that stars
grow dim in,
To the morning whence he comes to
take thy side.

None but he can bear the light that love
wraps him in,

When he comes on earth to take himself
a bride.

ANT. 5.

Light of light, name of names,

Whose shadows are live flames,

The soul that moves the wings of worlds
upon their way;

Life, spirit, blood and breath

In time and change and death

Substant through strength and weakness,
ardor and decay;

Lord of the lives of lands,

Spirit of man, whose hands

Weave the web through wherein man's
centuries fall as prey;

That art within our will

Power to make, save, and kill,

Knowledge and choice, to take extremities
and weigh;

In the soul's hand to smite

Strength, in the soul's eye sight;

That to the soul art even as is the soul to
clay;

Now to this people be

Love; come, to set them free,

With feet that tread the night, with eyes
that sound the day.

ANT. 6.

Thou that wast on their fathers dead

As effluent God effused and shed,

Heaven to be handled, hope made flesh,

Break for them now time's iron mesh;

Give them thyself for hand and head,

Thy breath for life, thy love for bread,

Thy thought for spirit to refresh,

Thy bitterness to pierce and sting,

Thy sweetness for a healing spring,

Be to them knowledge, strength, life,
light,

Thou to whose feet the centuries cling

And in the wide warmth of thy wing

Seek room and rest as birds by night,

O thou the kingless people's king,

To whom the lips of silence sing,

Called by thy name of thanksgiving

Freedom, and by thy name of might

Justice, and by thy secret name

Love; the same need is on the same

Men, be the same God in their sight!

From this their hour of bloody tears

Their praise goes up into thine ears,

Their bruised lips clothe thy name with
praises,

The song of thee their crushed voice
raises,

Their grief seeks joy for psalms to bor-
row,

With tired feet seeks her through time's
mazes

Where each day's blood leaves pale the
morrow,

And from their eyes in thine there gazes

A spirit other far than sorrow—

A soul triumphal, white and whole

And single, that salutes thy soul.

EPODE.

All the lights of the sweet heaven that sing
together;

All the years of the green earth that bare
man free;

Rays and lightings of the fierce or tender
weather,

Heights and lowlands, wastes and head-
lands of the sea,

Dawns and sunset, hours that hold the
world in tether,

Be our witnesses and seals of things to be.

Lo the mother, the Republic universal,

Hands that hold time fast, hands feeding
men with might,

Lips that sing the song of the earth, that
make rehearsal

Of all seasons, and the sway of day with
night,

Eyes that see as from a mountain the dis-
persal,

The huge ruin of things evil, and the
flight;

Large exulting limbs, and bosom godlike
 moulded
 Where the man-child hangs, and womb
 wherein he lay ;
 Very life that could it die would leave the
 soul dead,
 Face whereat all fears and forces flee
 away,
 Breath that moves the world as winds a
 flower-bell folded,
 Feet that trampling the gross darkness
 beat out day.
 In the hour of pain and pity,
 Sore spent, a wounded city,
 Her foster-child seeks to her, stately where
 she stands ;
 In the utter hour of woes,
 Wind-shaken, blind with blows,
 Paris lays hold upon her, grasps her with
 child's hands ;
 Face kindles face with fire,
 Hearts take and give desire,
 Strange joy breaks red as tempest on tor-
 mented lands.
 Day to day, man to man,
 Plights love republican,
 And faith and memory burn with passion
 toward each other ;
 Hope, with fresh heavens to track,
 Looks for a breath's space back,
 Where the divine past years reach hands
 to this their brother ;
 And souls of men whose death
 Was light to her and breath
 Send word of love yet living to the living
 mother.
 They call her, and she hears ;
 O France, thy marvellous years,
 The years of the strong travail, the
 triumphant time,
 Days terrible with love,
 Red-shod with flames thereof,
 Call to this hour that breaks in pieces
 crown and crime ;
 The hour with feet to spurn,
 Hands to crush, fires to burn
 The state whereto no latter foot of man
 shall climb.
 Yea, come what grief now may
 By ruinous night or day,
 One grief there cannot, one the first and
 last grief, shame.
 Come force to break thee and bow
 Down, shame can come not now,

Nor, though hands wound thee, tongues
 make mockery of thy name :
 Come swords and scar thy brow,
 No brand there burns it now,
 No spot but of thy blood marks thy white-
 fronted fame.
 Now though the mad blind morrow
 With shafts of iron sorrow
 Should split thine heart, and whirl thine
 head with sanguine waves ;
 Though all that draw thy breath
 Bled from all veins to death,
 And thy dead body were the grave of all
 their graves,
 And thine unchilded womb
 For all their tombs a tomb,
 At least within thee as on thee room were
 none for slaves.
 This power thou hast, to be,
 Come death or come not, free ;
 That in all tongues of time's this praise be
 chanted of thee,
 That in thy wild worst hour
 This power put in thee power,
 And moved as hope around and hung as
 heaven above thee,
 And while earth sat in sadness
 In only thee put gladness,
 Put strength and love, to make all hearts
 of ages love thee.
 That in death's face thy chant
 Arose up jubilant,
 And thy great heart with thy great peril
 grew more great :
 And sweet for bitter tears
 Put out the fires of fears,
 And love made lovely for thee loveless hell
 and hate ;
 And they that house with error,
 Cold shame and burning terror,
 Fled from truth risen and thee made migh-
 tier than thy fate.
 This shall all years remember ;
 For this thing shall September
 Have only name of honour, only sign of
 white.
 And this year's fearful name,
 France, in thine house of fame
 Above all names of all thy triumphs shalt
 thou write,
 When, seeing thy freedom stand
 Even at despair's right hand,
 The cry thou gavest at heart was only of
 delight.

D I R Æ.

Guai a voi, anime prave.

DANTE.

Soyez maudits, d'abord d'être ce que vous êtes,
Et puis soyez maudits d'obséder les poètes !

VICTOR HUGO.

I.—A DEAD KING.

[*Ferdinand II. entered Malebolge May 22nd, 1859.*]

Go down to hell. This end is good to see ;
The breath is lightened and the sense at ease

Because thou art not ; sense nor breath there is

In what thy body was, whose soul shall be Chief nerve of hell's pained heart eternally.

Thou art abolished from the midst of these

That art what thou wast : Pius from his knees

Blows off the dust that flecked them, bowed for thee.

Yea, now the long-tongued slack-lipped litanies

Fail, and the priest has no more prayer to sell—

Now the last Jesuit found about thee is The beast that made thy fouler flesh his cell—

Time lays his finger on thee, saying, 'Cease ; Here is no room for thee ; go down to hell.'

II.—A YEAR AFTER.

If blood throbs yet in this that was thy face,

O thou whose soul was full of devil's faith,

If in thy flesh the worm's bite slackeneth

In some acute red pause of iron days,

Arise now, gird thee, get thee on thy ways,

Breathe off the worm that crawls and fears not breath ;

King, it may be thou shalt prevail on death ;

King, it may be thy soul shall find out grace.

O spirit that hast eased the place of Cain, Weep now and howl, yea weep now sore ; for this

That was thy kingdom hath spat out its king.

Wilt thou plead now with God ? behold again,

Thy prayer for thy son's sake is turned to a hiss,

Thy mouth to a snake's whose slime out-lives the sting,

III.—PETER'S PENCE FROM PERUGIA.

ISCARIOT, thou grey-grown beast of blood. Stand forth to plead ; stand, while red drops run here

And there down fingers shaken with foul fear,

Down the sick shivering chin that stooped and sued,

Bowed to the bosom, for a little food

At Herod's hand, who smites thee cheek and ear.

Cry out, Iscariot ; haply he will hear ;

Cry, till he turn again to do thee good.

Gather thy gold up, Judas, all thy gold,

And buy thee death ; no Christ is here to sell,

But the dead earth of poor men bought and sold,

While year heaps year above thee safe in hell,

To grime thy grey dishonourable head

With dusty shame, when thou art damned and dead.

IV.—PAPAL ALLOCUTION.

'Popule mi, quid tibi feci?'

What hast thou done? Hark, till thine
ears wax hot,
Judas; for these and these things hast
thou done.
Thou hast made earth faint, and sickened
the sweet sun,
With fume of blood that reeks from limbs
that rot;
Thou hast washed thine hands and mouth,
saying, 'Am I not
Clean?' and thy lips were bloody, and
there was none
To speak for man against thee, no, not
one;
This hast thou done to us, Iscariot.
Therefore though thou be deaf and heaven
be dumb,
A cry shall be from under to proclaim
In the ears of all who shed men's
blood or sell
Pius the Ninth, Judas, the Second, come
Where Boniface out of the filth and flame
Barks for his advent in the clefts of
hell.*

V.—THE BURDEN OF AUSTRIA.
1866.

O DAUGHTER of pride, wasted with misery,
With all the glory that thy shame put on
Stripped off thy shame, O daughter of
Babylon,
Yea, whoso be it, yea, happy shall he be
That as thou hast served us hath rewarded
thee.
Blessed, who throweth against war's
boundary stone
Thy warrior brood, and breaketh bone by
bone
Misrule thy son, thy daughter Tyranny.
That landmark shalt thou not remove for
shame,
But sitting down there in a widow's weed
Wail; for what fruit is now of thy red fame?
Have thy sons too and daughters learnt
indeed
What thing it is to weep, what thing to
bleed?
Is it not thou that now art but a name?†

*Dante, 'Inferno,' xix. 53.

† 'A geographical expression.'—Metternich of Italy.

VI.—LOCUSTA.

COME close and see her and hearken. This
is she.
Stop the ways fast against the stench that
rips
Your nostril as it nears her. Lo, the lips
That between prayer and prayer find time
to be
Poisonous, the hands holding a cup and
key,
Key of deep hell, cup whence blood reeks
and drips;
The loose lewd limbs, the reeling hinge-
less hips,
The scurf that is not skin but leprosy.
This haggard harlot grey of face and green
With the old hand's cunning mixes her
new priest
The cup she mixed her Nero, stirred and
spiced.
She lisps of Mary and Jesus Nazarene
With a tongue tuned, and head that
bends to the east,
Praying. There are who say she is bride
of Christ.

VII.—CELÆNO.

THE blind king hides his weeping eyeless
head,
Sick with the helpless hate and shame
and awe,
Till food have choked the glutton hell-
bird's craw
And the foul cropful creature lie as dead
And soil itself with sleep and too much
bread;
So the man's life serves under the beast's
law,
And things whose spirit lives in mouth
and maw
Share shrieking the soul's board and soil
her bed,
Till man's blind spirit, their sick slave re-
sign
Its kingdom to the priests whose souls
are swine,
And the scourged serf lie reddening from
their rod,
Discrowned, disrobed, dismantled, with
lost eyes
Seeking where lurks in what conjectual
skies
That triple-headed hound of hell their God.

VIII.—A CHOICE.

FAITH is the spirit that makes man's body
and blood
Sacred, to crown when life and death
have ceased
His heavenward head for high fame's
holy feast ;
But as one swordstroke swift as wizard's rod
Made Cæsar carrion and made Brutus God,
Faith false or true, born patriot or born
priest,
Smites into semblance or of man or beast
The soul that feeds on clean or unclean food.
Lo here the faith that lives on its own light,
Visible music ; and lo there, the foul
Shape without shape, the happy throat
and howl.
Sword of the spirit of man ! arise and
smite,
And sheer through throat and claw and
maw and tongue
Kill the beast faith that lives on its own
dung.

IX.—THE AUGURS.

LAY the corpse out on the altar ; bid the
elect
Slaves clear the ways of service spiritual,
Sweep clean the stalled soul's serviceable
stall,
Ere the chief priest's dismantling hands
detect
The ulcerous flesh of faith all scaled and
specked
Beneath the bandages that hid it all,
And with sharp edgetools oecumenical
The leprous carcases of creeds dissect.
As on the night ere Brutus grew divine
The sick-souled augurs found their ox or
swine
Heartless ; so now too by their after art
In the same Rome, at an uncleane shrine,
Limb from rank limb, and putrid part
from part,
They carve the corpse—a beast without
a heart.

X.—A COUNSEL.

O STRONG Republic of the nobler years
Whose white feet shine beside time's
fairer flood
That shall flow on the clearer for our
blood

Now shed, and the less brackish for our
tears ;
When time and truth have put out hopes
and fears
With certitude, and love has burst the
bud,
If these whose powers then down the
wind shall scud
Still live to feel thee smite their eyes and
ears,
When thy foot's tread hath crushed their
crowns and creeds.
Care thou not then to crush the beast that
bleeds,
The snake whose belly cleaveth to the
sod,
Nor set thine heel on men as on their
deeds ;
But let the worm Napoleon crawl untrod,
Nor grant Mastai the gallows of his God.
1869.

XI.—THE MODERATES.

Virtutem videant intabescantque relictâ.

SHE stood before her traitors bound and
bare,
Clothed with her wounds and with her
naked shame
As with a weed of fiery tears and flame,
Their mother-land, their common weal and
care,
And they turned from her and denied, and
swore
They did not know this woman nor her
name.
And they took truce with tyrants and
grew tame,
And gathered up cast crowns and creeds to
wear,
And rags and shards regilded. Then she
took
In her bruised hands their broken pledge,
and eyed
These men so late so loud upon her side
With one inevitable and tearless look,
That they might see her face whom they
forsook ;
And they beheld what they had left, and
died.

February, 1870.

XII.—INTERCESSION.

Ave Cæsar Imperator, morituum te saluto.

I.

O DEATH, a little more, and then the worm ;
 A little longer, O Death, a little yet,
 Before the grave gape and the grave-worm fret ;
 Before the sanguine-spotted hand infirm
 Be rottenness, and that foul brain, the germ
 Of all ill things and thoughts, be stopped and set ;
 A little while, O Death, ere he forget,
 A small space more of life, a little term ;
 A little longer ere he and thou be met,
 Ere in that hand that fed thee to thy mind
 The poison-cup of life be overset ;
 A little respite of disastrous breath,
 Till the soul lift up her lost eyes, and find
 Nor God nor help nor hope, but thee O Death.

II.

Shall a man die before his dying day,
 Death ? and for him though the utter day be nigh,
 Not yet, not yet we give him leave to die ;
 We give him grace not yet that men should say
 He is dead, wiped out, perished and past away.
 Till the last bitterness of life go by,
 Thou shalt not slay him ; till those last dregs run dry,
 O thou last lord of life ! thou shalt not slay.
 Let the lips live a little while and lie,
 The hand a little, and falter, and fail of strength,
 And the soul shudder and sicken at the sky ;
 Yea, let him live, though God nor man would let
 Save for the curse's sake ; then at bitter length,
 Lord, will we yield him to thee, but not yet.

III.

Hath he not deeds to do and days to see
 Yet ere the day that is to see him dead ?
 Beats there no brain yet in the poisonous head.

Throbs there no treason ? if no such thing there be,
 If no such thought, surely this is not he.
 Look to the hands then ; are the hands not red ?
 What are the shadows about this man's bed ?
 Death, was not this the cupbearer to thee ?
 Nay, let him live then, till in this life's stead
 Even he shall pray for that thou hast to give ;
 Till seeing his hopes and not his memories fled
 Even he shall cry upon thee a bitter cry,
 That life is worse than death ; then let him live,
 Till death seem worse than life ; then let him die.

IV.

O watcher at the guardless gate of kings,
 O doorkeeper that serving at their feast
 Hast in thine hand their doomsday drink and seest
 With eyeless sight the soul of unseen things ;
 Thou in whose ear the dumb time coming sings,
 Death, priest and king that makest of king and priest
 A name, a dream, a less thing than the least,
 Hover awhile above him with closed wings,
 Till the coiled soul, an evil snake-shaped beast,
 Eat its base bodily lair of flesh away ;
 If haply, or ever its cursed life have ceased,
 Or ever thy cold hands cover his head
 From sight of France and freedom and broad day,
 He may see these and wither and be dead.

PARIS, September, 1869.

XIII.—THE SAVIOUR OF SOCIETY.

I.

O SON of man, but of what man who knows ?
 That broughtest healing on thy leathern wings
 To priests, and under them didst gather kings,

And madest friends to thee of all man's
foe's ;

Before thine incarnation, the tale goes,
Thy virgin mother, pure of sensual
stings.

Communed by night with angels of
chaste things,

And, full of grace, untimely felt the throes
Of motherhood upon her, and believed
The obscure annunciation made when
late

A raven-feathered raven-throated dove
Croaked salutation to the mother of
love

Whose misconception was immaculate,
And when her time was come she miscon-
ceived.

II.

Thine incarnation was upon this wise,
Saviour ; and out of east and west were
led

To thy foul cradle by thy planet red
Shepherds of souls that feed their sheep
with lies

Till the utter soul die as the body dies,
And the wise men that ask but to be fed
Though the hot shambles be their board
and bed

And sleep on any dunghill shut their eyes,
So they lie warm and fatten in the mire ;

And the high priest enthroned yet in thy
name,

Judas, baptised thee with men's blood for
hire ;

And now thou hangest nailed to thine
own shame

In sight of all time, but while heaven
has flame

Shalt find no resurrection from hell-fire.

December, 1869.

XIV.—MENTANA : SECOND ANNI- VERSARY.

*Est-ce qu'il n'est pas temps que la foudre se prouve,
Cieux profonds, en broyant ce chien, fils de la louve ?
La Légende des Siècles :—Rathbert*

I.

By the dead body of Hope, the spotless lamb
Thou threwest into the high priest's
slaughtering-room,
And by the child Despair born red
therefrom

As, thank the secret sire picked out to cram
With spurious spawn thy misconceiving
dam,

Thou, like a worm from a town's com-
mon tomb,

Didst creep from forth the kennel of her
womb,

Born to break down with catapult and ram
Man's builded towers of promise, and with
breath

And tongue to track and hunt his hopes to
death ;

O, by that sweet dead body abused and
slain

And by that child mismothered—dog, by all
Thy curses thou hast cursed mankind
withal,

With what curse shall man curse thee
back again ?

II.

By the brute soul that made man's soul its
food ;

By time grown poisonous with it ; by the
hate

And horror of all souls not miscreate ;

By the hour of power that evil hath on
good ;

And by the incognizable fatherhood
Which made a whorish womb the shame-
ful gate

That opening let out loose to fawn on
fate

A hound half-blooded ravening for man's
blood ;

(What prayer but this for these should any
say,

Thou dog of hell, but this that Shakespeare
said ?)

By night deflowered and desecrated day,
That fall as one curse on one cursed head,

'Cancel his bond of life, dear God, I pray,
That I may live to say, the dog is dead !

1869.

XV.—MENTANA : THIRD ANNI- VERSARY.

I.

SUCH prayers last year were put up for thy
sake ;

What shall this year do that hath lived to
see

The piteous and unpitied end of thee ?

What moan, what cry, what clamour shall
it make,
Seeing as a reed breaks all thine empire
break,
And all thy great strength as a rotten
tree,
Whose branches made broad night from
sea to sea,
And the world shuddered when a leaf would
shake ?
From the unknown deep wherein those
prayers were heard,
From the dark height of time there sounds
a word,
Crying, Comfort ; though death ride on
this red hour,
Hope waits with eyes that make the
morning dim,
Till liberty, reclothed with love and power,
Shall pass and know not if she tread on
him.

II.

The hour for which men hungered and had
thirst,
And dying were loth to die before it
came,
Is it indeed upon thee ? and the lame
Late foot of vengeance on thy trace accurst
For years insepulchred and crimes in-
hearsed,
For days marked red or black with blood
or shame,
Hath it outrun thee to tread out thy
name ?
This scourge, this hour, is this indeed the
worst ?
O clothed and crowned with curses, canst
thou tell ?
Have thy dead whispered to thee what
they see
Whose eyes are open in the dark on thee
Ere spotted soul and body take farewell
Or what of life beyond the worm's may
be
Sate the immitigable hours in hell ?
1870.

XVI.—THE DESCENT INTO HELL.

January 9th, 1873.

I.

O NIGHT and death, to whom we grudged
him then,

When in man's sight he stood not yet un-
done,
Your king, your priest, your saviour, and
your son,
We grudge not now, who know that not
again
Shall this curse come upon the sins of
men,
Nor this face look upon the living sun
That shall behold not so abhorred an
one
In all the days whereof his eye takes ken.
The bond is cancelled, and the prayer is
heard
That seemed so long but weak and wasted
breath ;
Take him, for he is yours, O night and
death
Hell yawns on him whose life was as a
word
Uttered by death in hate of heaven and
light,
A curse now dumb upon the lips of night.

II.

What shapes are these and shadows with-
out end
That fill the night full as a storm of
rain
With myriads of dead men and women
slain,
Old with young, child with mother, friend
with friend,
That on the deep mid wintering air impend,
Pale yet with mortal wrath and human
pain,
Who died that this man dead now too
might reign,
Toward whom their hands point and their
faces bend ?
The ruining flood would redden earth and
air
If for each soul whose guiltless blood was
shed
There fell but one drop on this one man's
head
Whose soul to-night stands bodiless and
bare,
For whom our hearts give thanks who put
up prayer,
That we have lived to say, the dog is
dead.

XVII.—APOLOGIA.

If wrath embitter the sweet mouth of song,
And make the sunlight fire before those
eyes

That would drink draughts of peace from
the unsoiled skies,
The wrongdoing is not ours, but ours the
wrong,

Who hear too loud on earth and see too long
The grief that dies not with the groan
that dies,

Till the strong bitterness of pity cries
Within us, that our anger should be strong.
For chill is known by heat and heat by
chill,

And the desire that hope makes love to
still

By the fear flying beside it or above,
A falcon fledged to follow a fledgeling
dove,

And by the fume and flame of hate of ill
The exuberant light and burning bloom
of love.

SONGS BEFORE SUNRISE.

DEDICATION.

TO

JOSEPH MAZZINI.

TAKE, since you bade it should bear,
 These, of the seed of your sowing,
 Blossom or berry or weed.
 Sweet though they be not, or fail,
 That the dew of your word kept grow-
 ing,
 Sweet at least was the seed.

Men bring you love-offerings of tears,
 And sorrow the kiss that assuages,
 And slaves the hate-offering of wrongs,
 And time the thanksgiving of years,
 And years the thanksgiving of ages ;
 I bring you my handful of songs.

If a perfume be left, if a bloom,
 Let it live till Italia be risen,
 'To be strewn in the dust of her car
 When her voice shall awake from the tomb
 England, and France from her prison,
 Sisters, a star by a star.

I bring you the sword of a song,
 The sword of my spirit's desire,
 Feeble ; but laid at your feet,

That which was weak shall be strong.
 That which was cold shall take fire,
 That which was bitter be sweet.

It was wrought not with hands to smite
 Nor hewn after swordsmiths' fashion,
 Nor tempered on anvil of steel ;
 But with visions and dreams of the night
 But with hope and the patience of passion,
 And the signet of love for a seal.

Be it witness, till one more strong.
 Till a loftier lyre, till a rarer
 Lute praise her better than I,
 Be it witness before you, my song,
 That I knew her, the world's banner-
 bearer,
 Who shall cry the republican cry.

Yea, even she as at first,
 Yea, she alone and none other,
 Shall cast down, shall build up, shall
 bring home ;
 Slake earth's hunger and thirst,
 Lighten, and lead as a mother ;
 First name of the world's names, Rome

PRELUDE.

BETWEEN the green bud and the red
 Youth sat and sang by Time, and shed
 From eyes and tresses flowers and tears,
 From heart and spirit hopes and fears,
 Upon the hollow stream whose bed
 Is channelled by the foamless years;
 And with the white the gold-haired head
 Mixed running locks, and in Time's ears
 Youth's dreams hung singing, and Time's
 truth
 Was half not harsh in the ears of Youth.

Between the bud and the blown flower
 Youth talked with joy and grief an hour,
 With footless joy and wingless grief
 And twin-born faith and disbelief
 Who share the seasons to devour;
 And long ere these made up their sheaf
 Felt the winds round him shake and shower
 The rose-red and the blood-red leaf,
 Delight whose germ grew never grain,
 And passion dyed in its own pain.

Then he stood up, and trod to dust
 Fear and desire, mistrust and trust,
 And dreams of bitter sleep and sweet,
 And bound for sandals on his feet
 Knowledge and patience of what must
 And what things may be, in the heat
 And cold of years that rot and rust
 And alter; and his spirit's meat
 Was freedom, and his staff was wrought
 Of strength, and his cloak woven of thought.

For what has he whose will sees clear
 To do with doubt and faith and fear,
 Swift hopes and slow despondencies?
 His heart is equal with the sea's
 And with the sea-wind's, and his ear
 Is level to the speech of these,
 And his soul communes and takes cheer
 With the actual earth's equalities,
 Air, light, and night, hills, winds, and
 streams,
 And seeks not strength from strengthless
 dreams.

His soul is even with the sun
 Whose spirit and whose eyes are one,

Who seeks not stars by day nor light
 And heavy heat of day by night.
 Him can no God cast down, whom none
 Can lift in hope beyond the height
 Of fate and nature and things done
 By the calm rule of might and right
 That bids men be and bear and do,
 And die beneath blind skies or blue.

To him the lights of even and morn
 Speak no vain things of love or scorn,
 Fancies and passions miscreate
 By man in things dispassionate.
 Nor holds he fellowship forlorn
 With souls that pray and hope and hate,
 And doubt they had better not been born,
 And fain would lure or scare off fate
 And charm their doomsman from their
 doom
 And make fear dig its own false tomb.

He builds not half of doubts and half
 Of dreams his own soul's cenotaph
 Whence hopes and fears with helpless
 eyes,
 Wrapt loose in cast-off cerecloths, rise
 And dance and wring their hands and laugh,
 And weep thin tears and sigh light sighs,
 And without living lips would quaff
 The living spring in man that lies,
 And drain his soul of faith and strength
 It might have lived on a life's length.

He hath given himself and hath not sold
 To God for heaven or man for gold,
 Or grief for comfort that it gives,
 Or joy for grief's restoratives,
 He hath given himself to time, whose fold
 Shuts in the mortal flock that lives
 On its plain pasture's heat and cold
 And the equal year's alternatives.
 Earth, heaven, and time, death, life, and he,
 Endure while they shall be to be.

"Yet between death and life are hours
 To flush with love and hide in flowers;
 What profit save in these?" men cry:
 "Ah, see, between soft earth and sky,

What only good things here are ours !"

They say, "what better wouldst thou try,
What sweeter sing of? or what powers
Serve, that will give thee ere thou die
More joy to sing and be less sad,
More heart to play and grow more glad?"

Play then and sing; we too have played,
We likewise, in that subtle shade.

We too have twisted through our hair
Such tendrils as the wild Loves wear,
And heard what nirth the Mænads made,
Till the wind blew our garlands bare
And left their roses disarrayed,

And smote the summer with strange air,
And disengirdled and disrowned
The limbs and locks that vine-wreaths
bound.

We too have tracked by star-proof trees
The tempest of the Thyiades

Scare the loud night on hills that hid
The blood-feasts of the Bassarid,
Heard their song's iron cadences
Fright the wolf hungering from the kid,
Outroar the lion-throated seas,
Outchide the north-wind if it chid,
And hush the torrent-tongued ravines
With thunders of their tambourines.

But the fierce flute whose notes acclaim
Dim goddesses of fiery fame,

Cymbal and clamorous kettledrum,
Timbrels and tabrets, all are dumb
That turned the high chill air to flame;
The singing tongues of fire are numb
That called on Cotys by her name
Edonian, till they felt her come
And maddened, and her mystic face
Lightened along the streams of Thrace.

For Pleasure slumberless and pale,
And Passion with rejected veil,

Pass, and the tempest-footed throng
Of hours that follow them with song
Till their feet flag and voices fail,
And lips that were so loud so long
Learn silence, or a wearier wail;
So keen is change, and time so strong,
To weave the robes of life and rend
And weave again till life have end.

But weak is change, but strengthless time,
To take the light from heaven or climb

The hills of heaven with wasting feet.
Songs they can stop that earth found
meet,

But the stars keep their ageless rhyme:
Flowers they can slay that spring thought
sweet.

But the stars keep their spring sublime;

Passions and pleasures can defeat,
Actions and agonies control,
And life and death, but not the soul.

Because man's soul is man's God still,
What wind soever waft his will

Across the waves of day and night
To port or shipwreck, left or right,
By shores and shoals of good and ill;
And still its flame at mainmast height
Through the rent air that foam-flakes fall
Sustains the indomitable light
Whence only man hath strength to steer
Or helm to handle without fear.

Save his own soul's light overhead,
None leads him, and none ever led,
Across birth's hidden harbor bar,
Past youth where shoreward shallows are,
Through age that drives on toward the red
Vast void of sunset hailed from far,
To the equal waters of the dead;
Save his own soul he hath no star,
And sinks, except his own soul guide,
Helmless in middle turn of tide.

No blast of air or fire of sun
Puts out the light whereby we run
With girdled loins our lamplight race,
And each from each takes heart of grace
And spirit till his turn be done,
And light of face from each man's face
In whom the light of trust is one;
Since only souls that keep their place
By their own light, and watch things roll,
And stand, have light for any soul.

A little time we gain from time
To set our seasons in some chime,
For harsh or sweet or loud or low,
With seasons played out long ago
And souls that in their time and prime
Took part with summer or with snow,
Lived abject lives out or sublime,
And had their chance of seed to sow
For service or disservice done
To those days dead and this their son.

A little time that we may fill
 Or with such good works or such ill
 As loose the bonds or make them strong
 Wherein all manhood suffers wrong.
 By rose-hung river and light-foot rill

There are who rest not ; who think long
 Till they discern as from a hill
 At the sun's hour of morning song,
 Known of souls only, and those souls free,
 The sacred spaces of the sea.

THE EVE OF REVOLUTION.

1.

THE trumpets of the four winds of the
 world
 From the ends of the earth blow battle ;
 the night heaves,
 With breasts palpitating and wings refurled,
 With passion of couched limbs, as one
 who grieves
 Sleeping, and in her sleep she sees uncurled
 Dreams serpent-shapen, such as sickness
 weaves,
 Down the wild wind of vision caught and
 whirled,
 Dead leaves of sleep, thicker than autumn
 leaves,
 Shadows of storm-shaped things,
 Flights of dim tribes of kings,
 The reaping men that reap men for
 their sheaves,
 And, without grain to yield,
 Their scythe-swept harvest-field
 Thronged thick with men pursuing and
 fugitives,
 Dead foliage of the tree of sleep,
 Leaves blood-colored and golden, blown
 from deep to deep.

2.

I hear the midnight on the mountains cry
 With many tongues of thunders, and I
 hear
 Sound and resound the hollow shield of
 sky
 With trumpet-throated winds that charge
 and cheer,
 And through the roar of the hours that
 fighting fly,
 Through flight and fight and all the
 fluctuant fear,
 A sound sublimer than the heavens are
 high,
 A voice more instant than the winds are
 clear,

Say to my spirit, "Take
 Thy trumpet too, and make
 A rallying music in the void night's ear,
 Till the storm lose its track,
 And all the night go back ;
 Till, as through sleep false life knows
 true life near,
 Thou know the morning through the
 night,
 And through the thunder silence, and
 through darkness light."

3.

I set the trumpet to my lips, and blow.
 The height of night is shaken, the skies
 break,
 The winds and stars and waters come and
 go
 By fits of breath and light and sound,
 that wake
 As out of sleep, and perish as the show
 Built up of sleep, when all her strengths
 forsake
 The sense-compelling spirit ; the depths
 glow,
 The heights flash, and the roots and
 summits shake
 Of earth in all her mountains.
 And the inner foamless fountains
 And wellsprings of her fast-bound forces
 quake ;
 Yea, the whole air of life
 Is set on fire of strife,
 Till change unmake things made and
 love remake ;
 Reason and love, whose names are one,
 Seeing reason is the sunlight shed from love
 the sun.

4.

The night is broken eastward ; is it day,
 Or but the watchfires trembling here and
 there,

Like hopes on memory's devastated way,
In moonless wastes of planet-stricken
air?

O many-childed mother great and grey,
O multitudinous bosom, and breasts that
bare

Our fathers' generations, whereat lay
The weanling peoples and the tribes that
were,

Whose new-born mouths long dead
Those ninefold nipples fed,

Dim face with deathless eyes and withered
hair,

Foress of obscure lands,

Whose multiplying hands

Wove the world's web with divers races
fair

And cast it waif-wise on the stream,
The waters of the centuries, where thou
sat'st to dream ;

5.

O many-minded mother and visionary,
Asia, that sawest their westering waters
sweep

With all the ships and spoils of time to
carry

And all the fears and hopes of life to
keep,

Thy vesture wrought of ages legendary
Hides usward thine impenetrable sleep,
And thy veiled head, night's oldest tribu-
tary,

We know not if it speak or smile or weep.
But where for us began

The first live light of man

And first-born fire of deeds to burn and
leap,

The first war fair as peace

To shine and lighten Greece,

And the first freedom moved upon the
deep,

God's breath upon the face of time

Moving, a present spirit, seen of men
sublime ;

6.

There where our east looks always to thy
west,

Our mornings to thine evenings, Greece
to thee,

These lights that catch the mountains crest
by crest,

Are they of stars or beacons that we see ?

Taygetus takes here the winds abreast,
And there the sun resumes Thermopylæ ;
The light is Athens where those remnants
rest,

And Salamis the sea-wall of that sea.

The grass men tread upon

Is very Marathon

The leaves are of that time-unstricken
tree

That storm nor sun can fret

Nor wind, since she that set

Made it her sign to men whose shield
was she ;

Here, as dead time his deathless
things,

Eurotas and Cephissus keep their sleepless
springs.

7

O hills of Crete, are these things dead ? O
waves,

O many-mouthed streams, are these
springs dry ?

Earth, dost thou feed and hide now none
but slaves ?

Heaven, hast thou heard of men that
would not die ?

Is the land thick with only such men's
graves

As were ashamed to look upon the sky ?

Ye dead, whose name outfaces and out-
braves

Death, is the seed of such as you gone by ?

Sea, have thy ports not heard

Some Marathonian word

Rise up to landward and to Godward fly ?

No thunder, that the skies

Sent not upon us, rise

With fire and earthquake and a cleaving
cry ?

Nay, light is here, and shall be
light,

Though all the face of the hour be over-
borne with night.

8.

I set the trumpet to my lips and blow.

The night is broken northward ; the pale
plains

And footless fields of sun-forgotten snow

Feel through their creviced lips and iron
veins

Such quick breath labor and such clean
blood flow

As summer-stricken spring feels in her
pains
When dying May bears June, too young to
know
The fruit that waxes from the flower that
waned ;
Strange tyrannies and vast,
Tribes frost-bound to their past,
Lands that are loud all through their
length with chains,
Wastes where the wind's wings
break,
Displumed by daylong ache
And anguish of blind snows and rack-
blown rains,
And ice that seals the White Sea's
lips,
Whose monstrous weights crush flat the
sides of shrieking ships :

9.

Horrible sights and sounds of the unreached
pole,
And shrill fierce climes of inconsolable
air,
Shining below the beamless aureole
That hangs about the north-wind's hurt-
ling hair,
A comet-lighted lamp, sublime and sole
Dawn of the dayless heaven where suns
despair :
Earth, skies, and waters, smitten into soul,
Feel the hard veil that iron centuries wear
Rent as with hands in sunder,
Such hands as make the thunder
And clothe with form all substance and
strip bare :
Shapes, shadows, sounds and lights
Of their dead days and nights
Take soul of life too keen for death to
bear ;
Life, conscience, forethought, will,
desire,
Flood men's inanimate eyes and dry-drawn
hearts with fire.

10.

Light, light, and light! to break and melt
in sunder
All clouds and chains that in one bond-
age bind
Eyes, hands, and spirits, forged by fear and
wonder

10

And sleek fierce fraud with hidden knife
behind ;
There goes no fire from heaven before their
thunder,
Nor are the links not malleable that wind
Round the snared limbs and souls that ache
thereunder ;
The hands are mighty, were the head not
blind.
Priest is the staff of king,
And chains and clouds one thing,
And fettered flesh with devastated mind.
Open thy soul to see,
Slave, and thy feet are free ;
Thy bonds and thy beliefs are one in kind,
And of thy fears thine irons wrought
Hang weights upon thee fashioned out of
thine own thought.

11.

O soul, O God, O glory of liberty,
To night and day their lightning and
their light !
With heat of heart thou kindest the quick
sea,
And the dead earth takes spirit from thy
sight ;
The natural body of things is warm with
thee,
And the world's weakness parcel of thy
might ;
Thou seest us feeble and forceless, fit to be
Slaves of the years that drive us left and
right,
Drowned under hours like waves
Wherethrough we row like slaves ;
But if thy finger touch us, these take
flight.
If but one sovereign word
Of thy live lips be heard,
What man shall stop us, and what God
shall smite ?
Do thou but look in our dead eyes,
They are stars that light each other till thy
sundawn rise.

12

Thou art the eye of this blind body of man,
The tongue of this dumb people ; shalt
thou not
See, shalt thou speak not for them ? Time
is wan
And hope is weak with waiting, and swift
thought

Hath lost the wings at heel wherewith he
 ran,
 And on the red pit's edge sits down dis-
 traught
 To talk with death of days republican
 And dreams and fights long since dreamt
 out and fought ;
 Of the last hope that drew
 To that red edge anew
 The firewhite faith of Poland without
 spot ;
 Of the blind Russian might,
 And fire that is not light ;
 Of the green Rhineland where thy spirit
 wrought ;
 But though time, hope, and memory
 tire,
 Canst thou wax dark as they do, thou whose
 light is fire ?

13.

I set the trumpet to my lips and blow.
 The night is broken westward ; the wide
 sea
 That makes immortal motion to and fro
 From world's end unto world's end, and
 shall be
 When nought now grafted of men's hands
 shall grow
 And as the weed in last year's waves are
 we
 Or spray the sea-wind shook a year ago
 From its sharp tresses down the storm
 to lee,
 The moving god that hides
 Time in its timeless tides
 Wherein time dead seems live eternity,
 That breaks and makes again
 Much mightier things than men,
 Doth it not hear change coming, or not
 see ?
 Are the deeps deaf and dead and
 blind,
 To catch no light or sound from landward
 of mankind ?

14.

O thou, clothed round with raiment of
 white waves,
 Thy brave brows lightening through the
 grey wet air,
 Thou, lulled with sea-sounds of a thousand
 caves,
 And lit with sea-shine to thine inland lair,

Whose freedom clothed the naked souls of
 slaves
 And stripped the muffled souls of tyrants
 bare,
 O, by the centuries of thy glorious graves,
 By the live light of the earth that was thy
 care,
 Live, thou must not be dead,
 Live ; let thine armed head
 Lift itself up to sunward and the fair
 Daylight of time and man,
 Thine head republican,
 With the same splendor on thine helmless
 hair
 That in his eyes kept up a light
 Who on thy glory gazed away their sacred
 sight ;

15.

Who loved and looked their sense to death
 on thee ;
 Who taught thy lips imperishable things,
 And in thine ears outsang thy singing sea ;
 Who made thy foot firm on the necks of
 kings
 And thy soul somehow steadfast—woe are
 we
 It was but for a while, and all the strings
 Were broken of thy spirit ; yet had he
 Set to such tunes and clothed it with
 such wings
 It seemed for his sole sake
 Impossible to break,
 And woundless of the worm that waits
 and stings,
 The golden-headed worm
 Made headless for a term,
 The king-snake whose life kindles with
 the spring's,
 To breathe his soul upon her bloom,
 And while she marks not turn her temple
 to her tomb.

16.

By those eyes blinded and that heavenly
 head
 And the secluded soul adorable,
 O Milton's land, what ails thee to be dead ?
 Thine ears are yet sonorous with his shell
 That all the songs of all thy sea-line fed
 With motive sound of spring-tides at mid
 swell,
 And through thine heart his thought as
 blood is shed,

Requicken thee with wisdom to do well ;
 Such sons were of thy womb,
 England, for love of whom
 Thy name is not yet writ with theirs that fell,
 But, till thou quite forget
 What were thy children, yet
 On the pale lips of hope is as a spell ;
 And Shelley's heart and Landor's mind
 Lit thee with latter watch-fires ; why wilt
 thou be blind ?

17.

Though all were else indifferent, all that live
 Spiritless shapes of nations ; though
 time wait
 In vain on hope till these have help to give,
 And faith and love crawl famished from
 the gate ;
 Canst thou sit shamed and self-contem-
 plative
 With soulless eyes on thy secluded fate ?
 Though time forgive them, thee shall he
 forgive
 Whose choice was in thine hand to be so
 great ?
 Who cast out of thy mind
 The passion of man's kind,
 And made thee and thine old name sep-
 arate ?
 Now when time looks to see
 New names and old and thee
 Build up our one Republic state by state,
 England with France, and France
 with Spain,
 And Spain with sovereign Italy strike
 hands and reign.

18.

O known and unknown fountain-heads that fill
 Our dear life-springs of England ! O
 bright race
 Of streams and waters that bear witness
 still
 To the earth her sons were made of ! O
 fair face
 Of England, watched of eyes death cannot
 kill,
 How should the soul that lit you for a
 space

Fall through sick weakness of a broken will
 To the dead cold damnation of disgrace ?
 Such wind of memory stirs
 On all green hills of hers,
 Such breath of record from so high a
 place,
 From years whose tongue of flame
 Prophesied in her name
 Her feet should keep truth's bright and
 burning trace,
 We needs must have her heart with
 us,
 Whose hearts are one with man's ; she must
 must be dead or thus.

19.

Who is against us ? who is on our side ?
 Whose heart of all men's hearts is one
 with man's ?
 Where art thou that wast prophetess and
 bride,
 When truth and thou trod under time and
 chance ?
 What latter light of what new hope shall
 guide
 Out of the snares of hell thy feet, O
 France ?
 What heel shall bruise these heads that hiss
 and glide,
 What wind-blow out these son-born fires
 that dance
 Before thee to thy death ?
 No light, no life, no breath,
 From thy dead eyes and lips shall take
 the trance,
 Till on that deadliest crime
 Reddening the feet of time
 Who treads through blood and passes,
 time shall glance
 Pardon, and Italy forgive,
 And Rome arise up whom thou slewest, and
 bid thee live.

20.

I set the trumpet to my lips and blow.
 The night is broken southward ; the
 springs run,
 The daysprings and the watersprings that
 flow
 Forth with one will from where their
 source was one,
 Out of the might of morning: high and low,
 The hungering hills feed full upon the
 sun,

The thirsting valleys drink of him and glow
 As a heart burns with some divine thing
 done,
 Or as blood burns again
 In the bruised heart of Spain,
 A rose renewed with red new life begun.
 Dragged down with thorns and
 briers,
 That puts forth buds like fires
 Till the whole tree take flower in unison,
 And prince that clogs and priest that
 clings
 Be cast as weeds upon the Gunghill of dead
 things.

21.

Ah heaven, bow down, be nearer ! This is
 she,
 Italia, the world's wonder, the world's
 care,
 Free in her heart ere quite her hands be free,
 And lovelier than her loveliest robe of air.
 The earth hath voice, and speech is in the
 sea,
 Sounds of great joy, too beautiful to bear ;
 All things are glad because of her, but we
 Most glad, who loved her when the worst
 days were.
 O sweetest, fairest, first,
 O flower, when times were worst,
 Thou hadst no stripe wherein we had no
 share,
 Have not our hearts held close,
 Kept fast the whole world's rose ?
 Have we not worn thee at heart whom
 none would wear ?
 First love and last love, light of lands
 Shall we not touch thee full-blown with our
 lips and hands ?

22.

O too much loved, what shall we say of
 thee ?
 What shall we make of our heart's burn-
 ing fire,
 The passion in our lives that fain would be
 Made each a brand to pile into the pyre
 That shall burn up thy foemen, and set free
 The flame whence thy sun-shadowing
 wings aspire ?
 Love of our life, what more than men are we,
 That this our breath for thy sake should
 expire,
 For whom to joyous death
 Glad gods might yield their breath,

Great gods drop down from heaven to
 serve for hire ?
 We are but men, are we,
 And thou art Italy ;
 What shall we do for thee with our de-
 sire ?
 What gift shall we deserve to give ?
 How shall we die to do thee service or how
 live ?

23.

The very thought in us how much we love
 thee
 Makes the throat sob with love and blinds
 the eyes,
 How should love bear thee, to behold
 above thee
 His own light burning from reverberate
 skies ?
 They give thee light, but the light given
 them of thee
 Makes faint the wheeling fires that fall
 and rise.
 What love, what life, what death of man's
 should move thee,
 What face that lingers or what foot that
 flies ?
 It is not heaven that lights
 Thee with such days and nights,
 But thou that heaven is lit from in such
 wise.
 O thou her dearest birth,
 Turn thee to lighten earth,
 Earth too that bore thee and yearns to
 thee and cries ;
 Stand up, shine, lighten, become
 flame,
 Till as the sun's name through all nations
 be thy name.

24.

I take the trumpet from my lips and sing.
 O life immeasurable and imminent love,
 And fear like winter leading hope like
 spring,
 Whose flower-bright brows the day-star
 sits above,
 Whose hand unwearable and untiring wing
 Strike music from a world that wailed and
 strove,
 Each bright soul born and every glorious
 thing,
 From very freedom to man's joy thereof,
 O time, O change and death,
 Whose now not hateful breath

But gives the music swifter feet to move
Through sharp remeasuring tones
Of reffluent antiphones
More tender-tuned than heart or throat
of dove,
Soul into soul, song into song,
Life changing into life, by laws that work
not wrong ;

25.

O natural force in spirit and sense, that art
One thing in all things, fruit of thine
own fruit,
O thought illimitable and infinite heart
Whose blood if life in limbs indissolute
That still keeps hurtless thine invisible part
And inextirpable thy viewless root
Whence all sweet shafts of green and
each thy dart
Of sharpening leaf and bud resundering
shoot ;
Hills that the day-star hails,
Heights that the first beam scales,
And heights that souls outshining suns
salute,
Valleys for each mouth born
Free now of plenteous corn,
Waters and woodlands musical or mute ;
Free winds that brighten brows as free
And thunder and laughter and lightning of
the sovereign sea ;

26.

Rivers and springs, and storms that seek
your prey
With strong wings ravening through the
skies by night
Spirits and stars that hold one choral way ;
O light of heaven, and thou the heaven-
lier light

Aflame above the souls of men that sway
All generations of all years with might ;
O sunrise of the repossessing day,
And sunrise of all-renovating right ;
And thou, whose trackless foot
Mocks hope's or fear's pursuit,
Swift Revolution, changing depth with
height ;
And thou, whose mouth makes one
All songs that seek the sun,
Screenc Republic of a world made white ;
Thou, Freedom, whence the soul's
springs ran ;
Praise earth for man's sake living, and for
earth's sake man.

27.

Make yourselves wings, O tarrying feet of
fate,
And hidden hour that hast our hope to
bear,
A child-god, through the morning-colored
gate
That lets love in upon the golden air,
Dead on whose threshold lies heart-broken
hate.
Dead discord, dead injustice, dead despair ;
O love long looked for, wherefore wilt
thou wait,
And shew not yet the dawn on thy bright
hair,
Not yet thine hand released
Refreshing the faint east,
Thine hand reconquering heaven, to seat
man there ?
Come forth, be born and live
Thou that hast help to give
And light to make man's day of man-
hood fair ;
With flight outflying the spherèd sun,
Hasten thine hour and halt not, till thy
work be done.

A WATCH IN THE NIGHT.

1.

WATCHMAN, what of the night ?—
Storm and thunder and rain,
Lights that waver and wane,
Leaving the watchfires unlit.
Only the balefires are bright,
And the flash of the lamps now and then
From a palace where spoilers sit,
Trampling the children of men.

2.

Prophet, what of the night ?—
I stand by the verge of the sea,
Banished, uncomfited, free,
Hearing the noise of the waves
And sudden flashes that smite
Some man's tyrannous head,
Thundering, heard among graves
That hide the hosts of his dead.

3.

Mourners, what of the night?—
 All night through without sleep
 We weep, and we weep, and we weep.
 Who shall give us our sons?
 Beaks of raven and kite,
 Mouths of wolf and of hound,
 Give us them back whom the guns
 Shot for your dead on the ground.

4.

Dead men, what of the night?—
 Cannon and scaffold and sword,
 Horror of gibbet and cord,
 Mowed us as sheaves for the grave,
 Mowed us down for the right.
 We do not grudge or repent.
 Freely to freedom we gave
 Pledges, till life should be spent.

5.

Statesman, what of the night?—
 The night will last me my time.
 The gold on a crown or a crime
 Looks well enough yet by the lamps.
 Have we not fingers to write,
 Lips to swear at a need?
 Then, when danger decamps,
 Bury the word with the deed.

6.

Warrior, what of the night?—
 Whether it be not or be
 Night, is as one thing to me.
 I for one, at the least,
 Ask not of dews if they blight,
 Ask not of flames if they slay,
 Ask not of prince or of priest
 How long ere we put them away

7.

Master, what of the night?—
 Child, night is not at all
 Anywhere, fallen or to fall,
 Save in our star-stricken eyes.
 Forth of our eyes it takes flight,
 Look we but once nor before
 Nor behind us, but straight on the skies
 Night is not then any more.

8.

Exile, what of the night?—
 The tides and the hours run out,
 The seasons of death and of doubt,
 The night-watches bitter and sore.
 In the quicksands leftward and right
 My feet sink down under me;
 But I know the scents of the shore
 And the broad blown breaths of the sea.

9.

Captives, what of the night?—
 It rains outside overhead
 Always, a rain that is red,
 And our faces are soiled with the rain.
 Here in the seasons' despite
 Day-time and night-time are one,
 Till the curse of the kings and the chain
 Break, and their toils be undone.

10.

Christian, what of the night?—
 I cannot tell; I am blind.
 I halt and hearken behind
 If haply the hours will go back
 And return to the dear dead light,
 To the watchfires and stars that of old
 Shone where the sky now is black,
 Glowed where the earth now is cold.

11.

High priest, what of the night?—
 The night is horrible here
 With haggard faces and fear,
 Blood, and the burning of fire.
 Mine eyes are emptied of sight,
 Mine hands are full of the dust,
 If the God of my faith be a liar,
 Who is it that I shall trust?

12.

Princes, what of the night?—
 Night with pestilent breath
 Feeds us, children of death
 Clothes us close with her gloom.
 Rapine and famine and fright
 Crouch at our feet and are fed.
 Earth where we pass is a tomb,
 Life where we triumph is dead.

13.

Martyrs, what of the night?—
 Nay, is it night with you yet?
 We, for our part, we forget
 What night was, if it were.
 The loud red mouth of the fight
 Are silent and shut where we are.
 In our eyes the tempestuous air
 Shines as the face of a star.

14.

England, what of the night?—
 Night is for slumber and sleep,
 Warm, no season to weep.
 Let me alone till the day.
 Sleep would I still if I might,
 Who have slept for two hundred years.
 Once I had honor, they say;
 But slumber is sweeter than tears.

15.

France, what of the night?—
 Night is the prostitute's noon,
 Kissed and drugged till she swoon,
 Spat upon, trod upon, whored.
 With bloodred rose-garlands dight,
 Round me reels in the dance
 Death, my saviour, my lord,
 Crowned; there is no more France.

16.

Italy, what of the night?—
 Ah, child, child, it is long!
 Moonbeam and starbeam and song
 Leave it dumb now and dark.

Yet I perceive on the height
 Eastward, not now very far,
 A song too loud for the lark,
 A light too strong for a star.

17.

Germany, what of the night?—
 Long has it lulled me with dreams;
 Now at midwatch, as it seems,
 Light is brought back to mine eyes,
 And the mastery of old and the might
 Lives in the joints of mine hands,
 Steadies my limbs as they rise,
 Strengthens my foot as it stands.

18.

Europe, what of the night?—
 Ask of heaven, and the sea
 And my babes on the bosom of me,
 Nations of mine, but ungrown.
 There is one who shall surely requite
 All that endure or that err;
 She can answer alone:
 Ask not of me, but of her.

19.

Liberty, what of the night?—
 I feel not the red rains fall,
 Hear not the tempest at all,
 Nor thunder in heaven any more.
 All the distance is white
 With the soundless feet of the sun.
 Night, with the woes that it wore,
 Night is over and done.

SUPER FLUMINA BABYLONIS.

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and
 wept,
 Remembering thee,
 That for ages of agony hast endured, and
 slept,
 And wouldst not see.

By the waters of Babylon we stood up and
 sang,
 Considering thee,
 That a blast of deliverance in the darkness
 rang,
 To set thee free.

And with trumpets and thunderings and
 with morning song
 Came up the light;
 And thy spirit uplifted thee to forget thy
 wrong
 As day doth night.

And thy sons were dejected not any more,
 as then
 When thou wast shamed;
 When thy lovers went heavily without
 heart, as men
 Whose life was maimed.

In the desolate distances, with a great
 desire,
 For thy love's sake,
 With our hearts going back to thee, they
 were filled with fire,
 Were nigh to break.

It was said to us : " Verily ye are great of
 heart,
 But ye shall bend ;
 Ye are bondsmen and bondswomen, to be
 scourged and smart,
 To toil and tend."

And with harrows men harrowed us, and
 subdued with spears,
 And crushed with shame ;
 And the summer and winter was, and the
 length of years,
 And no change came.

By the rivers of Italy, by the sacred streams,
 By town, by tower,
 There was feasting with revelling, there
 was sleep with dreams,
 Until thine hour.

And they slept and they rioted on their
 rose-hung beds,
 With mouths on flame,
 And with love-locks vine-chapleted, and
 with rose-crowned heads
 And robes of shame.

And they knew not their forefathers, nor
 the hills and streams
 And words of power,
 Nor the gods that were good to them, but
 with songs and dreams
 Filled up their hour.

By the rivers of Italy, by the dry streams'
 beds,
 When thy time came,
 There was casting of crowns from them,
 from their young men's heads,
 The crowns of shame.

By the horn of Eridanus, by the Tiber
 mouth,
 As thy day rose,
 They arose up and girded them to the
 north and south,
 By seas, by snows.

As a water in January the frost confines,
 Thy kings bound thee ;
 As a water in April is, in the new-blown
 vines,
 Thy sons made free.

And thy lovers that looked for thee, and
 that mourned from far,
 For thy sake dead,
 We rejoiced in the light of thee, in the
 signal star
 Above thine head.

In thy grief had we followed thee, in thy
 passion loved,
 Loved in thy loss ;
 In thy shame we stood fast to thee, with
 thy pangs were moved,
 Clung to thy cross.

By the hillside of Calvary we beheld thy
 blood,
 Thy bloodred tears,
 As a mother's in bitterness, an unebbing
 flood,
 Years upon years.

And the north was Gethsemane, without
 leaf or bloom,
 A garden sealed ;
 And the south was Aeldama, for a sanguine
 fume
 Hid all the field.

By the stone of the sepulchre we returned
 to weep,
 From far, from prison ;
 And the guards by it keeping it we beheld
 asleep,
 But thou wast risen.

And an angel's similitude by the unsealed
 grave,
 And by the stone :
 And the voice was angelical, to whose
 words God gave
 Strength like his own.

" Lo, the graveclothes of Italy that are
 folded up
 In the grave's gloom !
 And the guards as men wrought upon with
 charmed cup,
 By the open tomb

"And her body most beautiful, and her
shining head,
These are not here ;
For your mother, for Italy, is not surely
dead :
Have ye no fear.

"As of old time she spake to you, and you
hardly heard,
Hardly took heed,
So now also she saith to you, yet another
word,
Who is risen indeed.

"By my saying she saith to you, in your
ears she saith,
Who hear these things,
Put no trust in men's royalties, nor in
great men's breath,
Nor words of kings.

"For the life of them vanishes and is no
more seen,
Nor no more known ;
Nor shall any remember him if a crown
hath been,
Or where a throne.

"Unto each man his handiwork, unto each
his crown,
The just Fate gives ;
Whoso takes the world's life on him and his
own lays down,
He, dying so, lives.

"Whoso bears the whole heaviness of the
wronged world's weight
And puts it by,
It is well with him suffering, though he face
man's fate ;
How should he die ?

"Seeing death has no part in him any more,
no power
Upon his head ;
He has bought his eternity with a little hour,
And is not dead.

"For an hour, if ye look for him, he is no
more found,
For one hour's space ;
Then ye lift up your eyes to him and behold
him crowned,
A deathless face.

"On the mountains of memory, by the
world's well-springs,
In all men's eyes,
Where the light of the life of him is on all
past things,
Death only dies.

"Not the light that was quenched for us,
nor the deeds that were,
Nor the ancient days,
Nor the sorrows not sorrowful, nor the face
most fair
Of perfect praise."

So the angel of Italy's resurrection said,
So yet he saith ;
So the son of her suffering, that from breasts
nigh dead
Drew life, not death.

That the pavement of Golgotha should be
white as snow,
Not red, but white ;
That the waters of Babylon should no longer
flow,
And men see light.

THE HALT BEFORE ROME.

SEPTEMBER. 1867.

Is it so, that the sword is broken,
Our sword, that was halfway drawn ?
Is it so, that the light was a spark,
That the bird we hailed as the lark
Sang in her sleep in the dark,
And the song we took for a token
Bore false witness of dawn ?

Spread in the sight of the lion,
Surely, we said, is the net
Spread but in vain, and the snare
Vain ; for the light is aware,
And the common, the chainless air,
Of his coming whom all we cry on ;
Surely in vain is it set.

Surely the day is on our side,
 And heaven, and the sacred sun ;
 Surely the stars, and the bright
 Immemorial inscrutable night :
 Yea, the darkness, because of our light,
 Is no darkness, but blooms as a bower-side
 When the winter is over and done ;

Blooms underfoot with young grasses
 Green, and with leaves overhead,
 Windflowers white, and the low
 New-dropped blossoms of snow ;
 And or ever the May winds blow,
 And or ever the March wind passes,
 Flames with anemones red.

We are here in the world's bower-garden,
 We that have watched out the snow.
 Surely the fruitfuller showers,
 The splendider sunbeams are ours ;
 Shall winter return on the flowers,
 And the frost after April harden,
 And the fountains in May not flow ?

We have in our hands the shining
 And the fire in our hearts of a star.
 Who are we that our tongues should palter.
 Hearts bow down, hands falter,
 Who are clothed as with flame from the
 altar,
 That the kings of the earth, repining,
 Far off, watch from afar ?

Woe is ours if we doubt or dissemble,
 Woe, if our hearts not abide.
 Are our chiefs not among us, we said,
 Great chiefs, living and dead,
 To lead us glad to be led ?
 For whose sake, if a men of us tremble
 He shall not be on our side.

What matter if these lands tarry,
 That tarried (we said) not of old ?
 France, made drunken by fate,
 England, that bore up the weight
 Once of men's freedom, a freight
 Holy, but heavy to carry
 For hands overflowing with gold.

Though this be lame, and the other
 Fleet, but blind from the sun,
 And the race be no more to these,
 Alas ! nor the palm to seize,
 Who are weary and hungry of ease,
 Yet, O Freedom, we said, O our mother,
 Is there not left to thee one ?

Is there not left of thy daughters,
 Is there not one to thine hand ?
 Fairer than these, and of fame
 Higher from of old by her name ;
 Washed in her tears, and in flame
 Bathed as in baptism of waters,
 Unto all men a chosen land.

Her hope in her heart was broken,
 Fire was upon her, and clomb,
 Hiding her, high as her head ;
 And the world went past her and said
 (We heard it say) she was dead ;
 And now, behold, she hath spoken,
 She that was dead, saying, "Rome."

O mother of all men's nations,
 Thou knowest if the deaf world heard !
 Heard not now to her lowest
 Depths, where the strong blood slowest
 Beats at her bosom, thou knowest,
 In her toils, in her dim tribulations,
 Rejoiced not, hearing the word.

The sorrowful, bound unto sorrow,
 The woe-worn people, and all
 That of old were discomforted,
 And men that famish for bread,
 And men that mourn for their dead,
 She bade them be glad on the morrow,
 Who endured in the day of her thrall.

The blind, and the people in prison,
 Souls without hope, without home,
 How glad were they all that heard !
 When the winged white flame of the word
 Passed over men's dust, and stirred
 Death ; for Italia was risen,
 And risen her light upon Rome.

The light of her sword in the gateway
 Shone, an unquenchable flame,
 Bloodless, a sword to release,
 A light from the eyes of peace,
 To bid grief utterly cease,
 And the wrong of the old world straight-
 way
 Pass from the face of her fame :

Hers, whom we turn to and cry on,
 Italy, mother of men :
 From the light of the face of her glory,
 At the sound of the storm of her story,
 That the sanguine shadows and hoary
 Should flee from the foot of the lion,
 Lion-like, forth of his den.

As the answering of thunder to thunder
Is the storm-beaten sound of her past ;
As the calling of sea unto sea
Is the noise of her years yet to be ;
For this ye knew not is she,
Whose bonds are broken in sunder ;
This is she at the last.

So spake we aloud, high-minded,
Full of our will ; and behold,
The speech that was half-way spoken
Breaks, as a pledge that is broken,
As a king's pledge, leaving in token
Grief only for high hopes blinded,
New grief grafted on old.

We halt by the walls of the city,
Within sound of the clash of her chain.
Hearing, we know that in there
The lioness chafes in her lair,
Shakes the storm of her hair,
Struggles in hands without pity.
Roars to the lion in vain.

Whose hand is stretched forth upon her ?
Whose curb is white with her foam ?
Clothed with the cloud of his deeds,
Swathed in the shroud of his creeds,
Who is this that has trapped her and leads,
Who turns to despair and dishonor
Her name, her name that was Rome ?

Over fields without harvest or culture,
Over hords without honor or love,
Over nations that groan with their kings,
As an imminent pestilence flings
Swift death from her shadowing wings,
So he, who hath claws as a vulture,
Plumage and beak as a dove.

He saith, " I am pilot and haven,
Light and redemption I am
Unto souls overlabor'd," he saith ;
And to all men the blast of his breath
Is a savour of death unto death ;
And the Dove of his worship a raven,
And a wolf-cub the life-giving Lamb.

He calls his sheep as a shepherd,
Calls from the wilderness home,
" Come unto me and be fed,"
To feed them with ashes for bread
And grass from the graves of the dead.
Leaps on the fold as a leopard,
Slays, and says, " I am Rome."

Rome, having rent her in sunder,
With the clasp of an adder he clasps ;
Swift to shed blood are his feet,
And his lips, that have man for their meat,
Smoother than oil, and more sweet
Than honey, but hidden thereunder
Festers the poison of asps.

As swords are his tender mercies,
His kisses as mortal stings ;
Under his hallowing hands
Life dies down in all lands
Kings pray to him, prone where he stands,
And his blessings, as other men's curses,
Disanoint where they consecrate kings.

With an oil of unclean consecration,
With effusion of blood and of tears,
With uplifting of cross and of keys,
Priest, though thou hallow us these,
Yet even as they cling to thy knees
Nation awakens by nation,
King by king disappears.

How shall the spirit be loyal
To the shell of a spiritless thing ?
Erred once, in only a word,
The sweet great song that we heard
Poured upon Tuscany, erred,
Calling a crowned man royal
That was no more than a king.

Sea-eagle of English feather,
A song-bird beautiful-souled,
She knew not them that she sang ;
The golden trumpet that rang
From Florence, in vain for them, sprang
As a note in the nightingales' weather
Far over Fiesole rolled.

She saw not—happy, not seeing—
Saw not as we with her eyes
Aspromonte ; she felt
Never the heart in her melt
As in us when the news was dealt
Melted all hope out of being,
Dropped all dawn from the skies.

In that weary funeral season,
In that heart-stricken grief-ridden time,
The weight of a king and the worth,
With anger and sorrowful mirth,
We weighed in the balance of earth,
And light was his word as a treason,
And heavy his crown as a crime.

Banners of kings shall ye follow
 None, and have thrones on your side
 None ; ye shall gather and grow
 Silently, row upon row,
 Chosen of Freedom to go
 Gladly where darkness may swallow,
 Gladly where death may divide.

Have we not men with us royal,
 Men the masters of things ?
 In the days when our life is made new,
 All souls perfect and true
 Shall adore whom their forefathers slew ;
 And these indeed shall be loyal,
 And those indeed shall be kings.

Yet for a space they abide with us,
 Yet for a little they stand,
 Bearing the heat of the day.
 When their presence is taken away,
 We shall wonder and worship, and say,
 " Was not a star on our side with us ?
 Was not a God at our hand ? "

These, O men, shall ye honor,
 Liberty only, and these.
 For thy sake and for all men's and mine,
 Brother, the crowns of them shine
 Lighting the way to her shrine,
 That our eyes may be fastened upon her,
 That our hands may encompass her knees.

In this day is the sign of her shown to you ;
 Choose ye, to live or to die.
 Now is her harvest in hand ;
 Now is her light in the land ;
 Choose ye, to sink or to stard,
 For the might of her strength is made
 known to you
 Now, and her arm is on high.

Serve not for any man's wages,
 Pleasure nor glory nor gold ;
 Not by her side are they won
 Who saith unto each of you, " Son,
 Silver and gold have I none ;
 I give but the love of all ages,
 And the life of my people of old."

Fear not for any man's terrors ;
 Wait not for any man's word ;
 Patiently, each in his place,
 Gird up your loins to the race ;
 Following the print of her pace,
 Purged of desires and of errors,
 March to the tune ye have heard.

March to the tune of the voice of her,
 Breathing the balm of her breath,
 Loving the light of her skies.
 Blessed is he on whose eyes
 Dawns but her light as he dies ;
 Blessed are ye that make choice of her,
 Equal to life and to death.

Ye that when faith is nigh frozen,
 Ye that when hope is nigh gone,
 Still, over wastes, over waves,
 Still, among wrecks, among graves,
 Follow the splendor that saves,
 Happy, her children, her chosen,
 Loyal to her on.

The sheep of the priests, and the cattle
 That feed in the penfolds of kings,
 Sleek is their flock and well-fed ;
 Hardly she giveth you bread,
 Hardly a rest for the head,
 Till the day of the blast of the battle
 And the storm of the wind of her wings.

Ye that have joy in your living,
 Ye that are careful to live,
 You her thunders go by :
 Live, let men be, let them lie,
 Serve your season, and die ;
 Gifts have your masters for giving,
 Gifts hath not Freedom to give ;

She, without shelter or station,
 She, beyond limit or bar,
 Urges to slumberless speed
 Armies that famish, that bleed,
 Sowing their lives for her seed,
 That their dust may rebuild her a nation,
 That their souls may relight her a star.

Happy are all they that follow her ;
 Them shall no trouble cast down ;
 Though she slay them, yet shall they trust
 in her,
 For unsure there is nought nor unjust in her,
 Blemish is none, neither rust in her ;
 Though it threaten, the night shall not
 swallow her,
 Tempest and storm shall not drown.

Hither, O strangers, that cry for her,
 Holding your lives in your hands,
 Hither, for here is your light,
 Where Italy is, and her might ;
 Strength shall be given you to fight,
 Grace shall be given you to die for her,
 For the flower, for the lady of lands ;

Turn ye, whose anguish oppressing you
 Crushes, asleep and awake,
 For the wrong which is wrought as of yore ;
 That Italia may give of her store,
 Having these things to give and no more ;
 Only her hands on you, blessing you ;
 Only a pang for her sake ;

Only her bosom to die on ;
 Only her heart for a home,
 And a name with her children to be
 From Calabrian to Adrian sea
 Famous in cities made free
 That ring to the roar of the lion
 Proclaiming republican Rome.

MENTANA: FIRST ANNIVERSARY.

At the time when the stars are grey,
 And the gold of the molten moon
 Fades, and the twilight is thinned,
 And the sun leaps up, and the wind,
 Alight rose, not of the day,
 A stronger light than of noon.

As the light of a face much loved
 Was the face of the light that clomb -
 As a mother whitened with woes
 Her adorable head that arose ;
 As the sound of a god that is moved,
 Her voice went forth upon Rome.

At her lips it fluttered and failed
 Twice, and sobbed into song,
 And sank as a flame sinks under ;
 Then spake, and the speech was thunder,
 And the cheek as he heard it paled
 Of the wrongdoer grown grey with the
 wrong.

"Is it time, is it time appointed,
 Angel of time, is it near ?
 For the spent night aches into day
 When the kings shall slay not or pray,
 And the high-priest, accursed and anointed,
 Sickens to deathward with fear.

"For the bones of my slain are stirred,
 And the seed of my earth in her womb
 Moves as the heart of a bud
 Beating with odorous blood
 To the tune of the loud first bird
 Burns and yearns into bloom.

"I lay my hand on her bosom,
 My hand on the heart of my earth,
 And I feel as with shiver and sob
 The triumphant heart in her throb,
 The dead petals dilate into blossom,
 The divine blood beat into birth.

"O my earth, are the springs in thee dry ?
 O sweet, is thy body a tomb ?
 Nay, springs out of springs derive,
 And summers from summers alive,
 And the living from them that die ;
 No tomb is here, but a womb.

"O manifold womb and divine,
 Give me fruit of my children, give !
 I have given thee my dew for thy root,
 Give thou me for my mouth of thy fruit ;
 Thine are the dead that are mine,
 And mine are thy sons that live.

"O goodly children, O strong
 Italian spirits, that wear
 Could time or the world misdoubt you,
 My glories as garments about you,
 Behold, in disproof of the wrong,
 The field of the grave-pits there.

"And ye that fell upon sleep,
 We have you too with us yet.
 Fairer than life or than youth
 Is this, to die for the truth :
 No death can sink you so deep
 As their graves whom their brethren for-
 get.

"Were not your pains as my pains ?
 As my name are your names not divine ?
 Was not the light in your eyes
 Mine, the light of my skies,
 And the sweet shed blood of your veins,
 O my beautiful martyrs, mine ?

"Of mine earth were your dear limbs
 made,
 Of mine air was your sweet life's breath ;
 At the breasts of my love ye were fed,
 O my children, my chosen, my dead,
 At my breasts where again ye are laid,
 At the old mother's bosom, in death.

"But ye that live. O their brothers,
 Be ye to me as they were ;
 Give me, my children that live,
 What these dead grudged not to give,
 Who alive were son's of your mother's,
 Whose lips drew breath of your air.

"Till darkness by dawn be cloven,
 Let youth's self mourn and abstain ;
 And love's self find not an hour,

And spring's self wear not a flower,
 And Lycoris, with hair unenwoven,
 Hail back to the banquet in vain.

"So sooner and surer the glory
 That is not with us shall be,
 And stronger the hands that smite
 The heads of the sons of night,
 And the sound throughout earth of our story
 Give all men heart to be free."

BLESSED AMONG WOMEN.

TO THE SIGNORA CAIROLI.

1.

BLESSED was she that bare,
 Hidden in flesh most fair,
 For all men's sake the likeness of all love :
 Holy that virgin's womb,
 The old record saith, on whom
 The glory of God alighted as a dove ;
 Blessed, who brought to gracious
 birth
 The sweet-souled Saviour of a man-tor-
 mented earth.

2.

But four times art thou blest,
 At whose most holy breast
 Four times a godlike soldier-saviour hung :
 And thence a fourfold Christ
 Given to be sacrificed
 To the same cross as the same bosom clung ;
 Poured the same blood, to leave the
 same
 Light on the many-folded mountain-skirts
 of fame.

3.

Shall they and thou not live,
 The children thou didst give
 Forth of thine hands, a godlike gift, to
 death,
 Through fire of death to pass
 For her high sake that was
 Thine and their mother, that gave all you
 breath ?
 Shall ye not live till time drop dead,
 O mother, and each her children's conse-
 crated head ?

4.

Many brought gifts to take
 For her love's supreme sake,
 Life and life's love, pleasure and praise
 and rest,
 And went forth bare ; but thou,
 So much once richer, and now
 Poorer than all these, more than these be
 blest ;
 Poorer so much, by so much given,
 Than who gives earth for heaven's sake,
 not for earth's sake heaven.

5.

Somewhat could each soul save,
 What thing soever it gave,
 But thine, mother, what has thy soul kept
 back ?
 None of thine all, not one,
 To serve thee and be thy son,
 Feed with love all thy days, lest one day
 lack ;
 All thy whole life's love, thine
 heart's whole,
 Thou hast given as who gives gladly, O
 thou the supreme soul.

6.

The heart's pure flesh and blood,
 The heaven thy motherhood,
 The live lips, the live eyes, that lived on
 thee ;
 The hands that clove with sweet
 Blind clutch to thine, the feet
 That felt on earth their first way to thy
 knee ;

The little laughter of mouths milk-fed,
Now open again to feed on dust among the dead ;

7.

The fair, strong, yongg men's strength,
Light of life-days and length,
And glory of earth seen under and stars above,
And years that bring to tame
Now the wild falcon fame,
Now, to stroke smooth, the dove-white breast of love ;
The life unliv'd, the unsown seeds,
Suns un beholden, sons unsung, and undone deeds.

8.

Therefore shall man's love be
As an own son to thee,
And the world's worship of thee for a child ;
All thine own land as one
New-born, a nursing son,
All thine own people a new birth undefiled ;
And all the unborn Italian time,
And all its glory, and all its works, thy seed sublime.

9.

That henceforth no man's breath,
Saying " Italy," but saith
In that Most sovereign word thine equal name ;
Nor can one speak of thee
But he saith " Italy,"
Seeing in two sons one co-eternal flame ;
One heat, one heaven, one heart,
One fire,
One light, one love, one benediction, one desire.

10.

Blest above praise and prayer
And incense of men's air,
Thy place is higher than where such voices rise
As in men's temples make
Music for some vain sake,
This God's or that God's, in one weary wise ;
Thee the soul silent, the shut heart.

The locked lips of the spirit praise thee
that thou art.

11.

Yea, for man's whole life's length,
And with man's whole soul's strength,
We praise thee, O holy, and bless thee, O mother of lights ;
And send forth as on wings
The world's heart's thanksgiving
Song-birds to sing thy days through and thy nights ;
And wrap thee around and arch thee above
With the air of benediction and the heaven of love.

12.

And toward thee our unbreathed words
Fly speechless, winged as birds,
As the Indian flock, children of Paradise,
The winged things without feet,
Fed with God's dew for meat,
That live in the air and light of the utter skies ;
So fleet, so flying a footless flight,
With wings for fleet love seeks thee, to partake thy sight.

13.

Love like a clear sky spread
Bends over thy loved head,
As a new heaven bends over a new-born earth,
When the old night's womb is great
With young stars passionate
And fair new planets fiery-fresh from birth ;
And moon-white here, there hot like Mars,
Souls that are worlds shine on thee, spirits that are stars.

14.

Till the whole sky burns through
With heaven's own heart-deep hue,
With passion-colored glories of lit souls ;
And thine above all names
Writ highest with lettering flames
Lightens, and all the old starriest auroles
And all the old holiest memories wane.

And the old names of love's chosen, found
in thy sight vain.

15.

And crowned heads are disrowned,
And stars sink without sound,
And love's self for thy love's sake waxes
pale ;
Seeing from his storied skies
In what new reverent wise
Thee Rome's most highest, her sovereign
daughters, hail ;
Thee Portia, thee Veturia grey,
Thee Arria, thee Cornelia, Roman more
than they.

16.

Even all these as all we
Subdue themselves to thee,
Bow their heads haloed, quench their fiery
fame ;
Seen through dim years divine,
Their faint lights feminine
Sink, then spring up rekindled from thy
flame ;
Fade, then reflower and reillumine
From thy fresh spring their wintering age
with new-blown bloom.

17.

To thy much holier head
Even theirs, the holy and dead,
Bow themselves each one from her heaven-
ward height ;
Each in her shining turn,
All tremble toward thee and yearn
To melt in thine their consummated light ;
Till from day's Capitolian dome
One glory of many glories lighten upon
Rome.

18.

Hush thyself, song, and cease,
Close, lips, and hold your peace ;
What help hast thou, what part have ye
herein ?

But you, with sweet shut eyes,
Heart-hidden memories,
Dreams and dumb thoughts that keep
what things have been
Silent, and pure of all words save,
Praise without song the living, without dirge
the dead.

19.

Thou, strengthless in these things,
Song, fold thy feebler wings,
And as a pilgrim go forth girt and shod
And where the new graves are,
And where the sunset star,
To the purest spirit of man that men call God,
To the high soul of things, that is
Made of men's heavenlier hopes and might-
ier memories ;

20.

To the elements that make
For the soul's living sake
This raiment of dead things, of shadow and
trance,
That give us chance and time
Wherein to aspire and climb
And set our life's work higher than time or
chance ;
The old sacred elements, that give
The breath of life to days that die, to deeds
that live ;

21.

To them, veiled gods and great,
There bow thee and dedicate
Thespeechless spirit in these thy weak words
hidden ;
And mix thy reverent breath
With holier air of death,
At the high feast of sorrow a guest unbidden,
Till with divine triumphal tears
Thou fill men's eyes who listen with a
heart that hears.

THE LITANY OF NATIONS.

μᾶ Γᾶ, μᾶ Γᾶ, βοᾶν
φοβερὸν ἀπότρεπε.

ÆSCH. *Supp* 390.

CHORUS.

IF with voice of words or prayers thy sons
may reach thee,
We thy latter sons, the men thine after-
birth,
We the children of thy grey-grown age,
O Earth,
O our mother everlasting, we beseech thee,
By the sealed and secret ages of thy life ;
By the darkness wherein grew thy sacred
forces ;
By the songs of stars thy sisters in their
courses ;
By thine own song hoarse and hollow and
shrill with strife ;
By thy voice distuned and marred of modu-
lation ;
By thy discord of thy measures march
with theirs ;
By the beauties of thy bosom, and the
cares ;
By thy glory of growth, and the splendor
of thy station ;
By the shame of men thy children, and the
pride ;
By the pale-cheeked hope that sleeps and
weeps and passes,
As the grey dew from the morning
mountain-grasses ;
By the white-lipped sightless memories
that abide ;
By the silence and the sound of many
sorrows ;
By the joys that leapt up living and fell
dead ;
By the veil that hides thy hands and
breasts and head,
Wrought of divers colored days and nights
and morrows ;
Isis, thou that knowest of God what worlds
are worth,
Thou the ghost of God, the mother un-
created,

Soul for whom the floating forceless ages
waited
As our forceless fancies wait on thee, O
Earth ;
Thou the body and soul, the father-God
and mother,
If at all it move thee, knowing of all
things done
Here where evil things and good things
are not one,
But their faces are as fire against each other ;
By thy morning and thine evening, night
and day ;
By the first white light that stirs and
strives and hovers
As a bird above the brood her bosom
covers,
By the sweet last star that takes the west-
ward way ;
By the night whose feet are shod with snow
or thunder,
Fledged with plumes of storm, or sound-
less as the dew ;
By the vesture bound of many-folded
blue
Round her breathless breasts, and all the
woven wonder ;
By the golden-growing eastern stream of
sea ;
By the sounds of sunrise moving in the
mountains ;
By the forces of the floods and unsealed
fountains ;
Thou that badest man be born, bid man be
free.

GREECE.

I am she that made thee lovely with my
beauty
From north to south ;
Mine, the fairest lips, took first the fire of
duty
From thine own mouth.

Mine, the fairest eyes, sought first thy laws
and knew them
Truths undefiled ;
Mine, the fairest hands, took freedom first
into them,
A weanling child.
By my light, now he lies sleeping, seen
above him
Where none sees other :
By my dead that loved and living men that
love him ;
(*Cho.*) Hear us, O mother.

ITALY.

I am she that was the light of thee en-
kindled
When Greece grew dim ;
She whose life grew up with man's free life,
and dwindled
With wane of him
She that once by sword and once by word
imperial
Struck bright thy gloom ;
And a third time, casting off these years
funeral,
Shall burst thy tomb.
By that bond 'twixt thee and me whereat
affrighted
Thy tyrants fear us ;
By that hope and this remembrance re-
united ;
(*Cho.*) O mother, hear us.

SPAIN.

I am she that set my seal upon the name-
less
West worlds of seas ;
And my sons as brides took unto them the
tameless
Hesperides.
Till my sins and sons through sinless lands
dispersed,
With red flame shod,
Made accurst the name of man, and thrice
accursed
The name of God.
Lest for those past fires the fires of my re-
pentance
Hell's fume yet smother,
Now my blood would buy remission of my
sentence ;
(*Cho.*) Hear us, O mother.

FRANCE.

I am she that was thy sign and standard-
bearer,
Thy voice and cry ;
She that washed thee with her blood and
left thee fairer.
The same was I.
Were not these the hands that raised thee
fallen and fed thee,
These hands defiled ?
Was not I thy tongue that spake, thine eye
that led thee,
Not I thy child ?
By the darkness on our dreams, and the
dead errors
Of dead times near us ;
By the hopes that hang around thee, and
the terrors ;
(*Cho.*) O mother, hear us.

RUSSIA.

I am she whose hands are strong and her
eyes blinded
And lips athrust
Till upon the night of nations many-minded
One bright day burst :
Till the myriad stars be molten into one
light,
And that light thine ;
Till the soul of man be parcel of the sun-
light,
And thine of mine.
By the snows that blanch not him nor
cleanse from slaughter
Who slays his brother ;
By the stains and by the chains on me thy
daughter ;
(*Cho.*) Hear us, O mother

SWITZERLAND.

I am she that shews on mighty limbs and
maiden
Nor chain nor stain ;
For what blood can touch these hands with
gold unladen,
These feet what chain ?
By the surf of spears one shieldless bosom
breasted
And was my shield,
Till the plume-plucked Austrian vulture-
heads twin crested
Twice drenched the field ;

By the snows and souls untrampled and
untroubled
That shine to cheer us,
Light of those to these responsive and re-
doubled ;
(*Cho.*) O mother, hear us.

GERMANY.

I am she beside whose forest-hidden foun-
tains
Slept freedom armed,
By the magic born to music in my
mountains
Heart-chained and charmed.
By those days the very dream whereof
delivers
My soul from wrong ;
By the sounds that make of all my ringing
rivers
None knows what song ;
By the many tribes and names of my division
One from another ;
By the single eye of sun-compelling vision ;
(*Cho.*) Hear us, O mother.

ENGLAND.

I am she that was and was not of thy
chosen,
Free, and not free ;
She that fed thy springs, till now her springs
are frozen ;
Yet I am she.
By the sea that clothed and sun that saw
me splendid
And fame that crowned.
By the song-fires and the sword-fires mixed
and blended
That robbed me round ;
By the star that Milton's soul for Shelley's
lighted,
Whose rays insphere us ;
By the beacon-bright Republic far-off
sighted ;
(*Cho.*) O mother, hear us.

CHORUS.

Turn away from us the cross-blown blasts
of error,
That drown each other ;
Turn away the fearful cry, the loud tongued
terror,
O Earth, O mother.

Turn away their eyes who track, their hearts
who follow,
The pathless past ;
Shew the soul of man, as summer shows the
swallow,
The way at last.
By the sloth of men that all too long endure
men
On man to tread ;
By the cry of men, the bitter cry of poor
men
That faint for bread ;
By the blood-sweat of the people in the
garden
Inwalled of kings ;
By his passion interceding for their pardon
Who do these things ;
By the sightless souls and fleshless limbs
that labor
For not their fruit ;
By the foodless mouth with foodless heart
for neighbor,
That, mad, is mute ;
By the child that famine eats as worms the
blossom
—Ah God, the child !
By the milkless lips that strain the blood-
less bosom
Till woe runs wild ;
By the pastures, that give grass to feed the
lamb in,
Where men lack meat ;
By the cities clad with gold and shame and
famine ;
By field and street ;
By the people, by the poor man, by the
master
That men call slave ;
By the cross-winds of defeat and of disaster,
By wreck by wave ;
By the helm that keeps us still to sunwards
driving,
Still eastward bound,
Till, as night-watch ends, day burn on eyes
reviving,
And land be found ;
We thy children, that arraign not nor im-
peach thee
Though no star steer us,
By the waves that wash the morning we
beseech thee,
O mother, hear us,

HERTHA.

I AM that which began ;
 Out of me the years roll ;
 Out of me God and man ;
 I am equal and Whole ;
 God changes, and man, and the form of
 them bodily ; I am the soul.

Before ever land was,
 Before ever the sea,
 Or soft hair of the grass,
 Or fair limbs of the tree,
 Or the flesh-colored fruit of my branches,
 I was, and thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources
 First drifted and swam ;
 Out of me are the forces
 That save it or damn ;
 Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast
 and bird ; before God was, I am.

Beside or above me
 Nought is there to go ;
 Love or unlove me,
 Unknow me or know,
 I am that which unloves me and loves ; I
 am stricken, and I am the blow.

I the mark that is missed
 And the arrows that miss,
 I the mouth that is kissed
 And the breath in the kiss,
 The search, and the sought, and the seeker,
 the soul and the body that is.

I am that thing which blesses
 My spirit elate ;
 That which caresses
 With hands uncreate
 My limbs unbegotten that measure the
 length of the measure of fate.

But what thing dost thou now,
 Looking Godward, to cry
 " I am I, thou art thou,
 I am low, thou art high ?"
 I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him ;
 find thou but thyself, thou art I.

I the grain and the furrow,
 The plough-cloven clod
 And the ploughshare drawn
 thorough,
 The germ and the sod,
 The deed and the doer, the seed and the
 sower, the dust which is God.

Hast thou known how I fashioned
 thee,
 Child, underground ?
 Fire that impassioned thee,
 Iron that bound,
 Dim changes of water, what thing of all
 these hast thou known of or found ?

Canst thou say in thine heart
 Thou has seen with thine eyes
 With what cunning of art
 Thou wast wrought in what wise,
 By what force of what stuff thou wast shap-
 en, and shown on my breast to the skies ?

Who hath given, who hath sold it
 thee,
 Knowledge of me ?
 Hath the wilderness told it thee ?
 Hast thou learnt of the sea ?
 Hast thou communed in spirit with night ?
 have the winds taken counsel with thee ?

Have I set such a star
 To show light on thy brow
 That thou sawest from afar
 What I show to thee now ?
 Have ye spoken as brethren together, the
 sun and the mountains and thou ?

What is here, dost thou know it ?
 What was, hast thou known ?
 Prophet nor poet
 Nor tripod nor throne
 Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer, but
 only thy mother alone.

Mother, not maker,
 Born, and not made ;
 Though her children forsake her,
 Allured or afraid,
 Praying prayers to the God of their fashion,
 she stirs not for all that have prayed.

A creed is a rod,
 And a crown is of night ;
 But this thing is God,
 To be man with thy might,
 To grow straight in the strength of thy
 spirit, and live out thy life as the light.

I am in thee to save thee,
 As my soul in thee saith,
 Give thou as I gave thee,
 Thy life-blood and breath,
 Green leaves of thy labor, white flowers of
 thy thought, and red fruit of thy death.

Be the ways of thy giving
 As mine were to thee ;
 The free life of thy living,
 Be the gift of it free ;
 Not as servant to lord, nor as master to
 slave, shalt thou give thee to me.

O children of banishment,
 Souls overcast,
 Were the lights ye see vanish meant
 Always to last,
 Ye would know not the sun overshining the
 shadows and stars overpast.

I that saw where ye trod
 The dim paths of the night
 Set the shadow called God
 In your skies to give light ;
 But the morning of manhood is risen, and
 the shadowless soul is in sight.

The tree many-rooted
 That swells to the sky
 With frondage red-fruited,
 The life-tree am I ;
 In the buds of your lives is the sap of my
 leaves : ye shall live and not die.

But the Gods of your fashion
 That take and that give,
 In their pity and passion
 That scourge and forgive,
 They are worms that are bred in the bark
 that falls off : they shall die and not
 live.

My own blood is what stanches
 The wounds in my bark :
 Stars caught in my branches
 Make day of the dark,
 And are worshipped as suns till the sunrise
 shall tread out their fires as a spark.

Where dead ages hide under
 The live roots of the tree,
 In my darkness the thunder
 Make utterance of me ;
 In the clash of my boughs with each other
 ye hear the waves sound of the sea.

That noise is of Time,
 As his feathers are spread
 And his feet set to climb
 Through the boughs overhead,
 And my foliage rings round him and rustles,
 and branches are bent with his tread.

The storm-winds of ages
 Blow through me and cease,
 The war-wind that rages,
 The spring-wind of peace,
 Ere the breath of them roughen my tresses,
 ere one of my blossoms increase.

All sounds of all changes,
 All shadows and lights
 On the world's mountain-ranges
 And stream-riven heights,
 Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and lan-
 guage of storm-clouds on earth-shaking
 nights ;

All forms of all faces,
 All works of all hands
 In unsearchable places
 Of time-stricken lands,
 All death and all life, and all reigns and all
 ruins, drop through me as sands.

Though sore be my burden
 And more than ye know,
 And my growth have no guerdon
 But only to grow,
 Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings
 above me or deathworms below.

These too have their part in me,
 As I too in these ;
 Such fire is at heart in me,
 Such sap is this tree's,
 Which hath in it all sounds and all secrets
 of infinite lands and of seas.

In the spring-colored hours
 When my mind was as May's,
 There brake forth of me flowers
 By centuries of days,
 Strong blossoms with perfume of manhood,
 shot out from my spirit as rays.

And the sound of them springing
 And smell of their shoots
 Were as warmth and sweet singing
 And strength to my roots ;
 And the lives of my children made perfect
 with freedom of soul were my fruits.

I bid you but he ;
 I have need not of prayer ;
 I have need of you free
 As your mouths of mine air ;
 That my heart may be greater within me,
 beholding the fruits of me fair.

More fair than strange fruit is
 Of faiths ye espouse ;
 In me only the root is
 That blooms in your boughs ;
 Behold now your God that ye made you,
 to feed him with faith of your vows.

In the darkening and whitening
 Abysses adored,
 With dayspring and lightning
 For lamp and for sword,
 God thunders in heaven, and his angels
 are red with the wrath of the Lord.

O my sons, O too dutiful
 Toward Gods not of me,
 Was not I enough beautiful ?
 Was it hard to be free ?
 For behold, I am with you, am in you and
 of you ; look forth now and see.

Lo, winged with world's wonders,
 With miracles shod,
 With the fires of his thunders
 For raiment and rod,
 God trembles in heaven, and his angels are
 white with the terror of God.

For his twilight is come on him,
 His anguish is here ;
 And his spirits gaze dumb on him,
 Grown grey from his fear ;
 And his hour taketh hold on him stricken,
 the last of his infinite year.

Thought made him and breaks him,
 Truth slays and forgives ;
 But to you, as time takes him,
 This new thing it gives,
 Even love, the beloved Republic, that feeds
 upon freedom and lives.

For truth only is living,
 Truth only is whole,
 And the love of his giving
 Man's polestar and pole ;
 Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of my
 body, and seed of my soul.

One birth of my bosom ;
 One beam of mine eye :
 One topmost blossom
 That scales the sky ;
 Man, equal and one with me, man that is
 made of me, man that is I.

BEFORE A CRUCIFIX.

HERE, down between the dusty trees,
 At this lank edge of haggard wood,
 Women with labor-loosened knees,
 With gaunt backs bowed by servitude,
 Stop, shift their loads, and pray, and fare
 Forth with souls easier for the prayer.

The suns have branded black, the rains
 Striped grey this piteous God of theirs ;
 The face is full of prayers and pains,
 To which they bring their pains and
 prayers ;
 Lean limbs that shew the laboring bones,
 And ghastly mouth that gapes and groans.

God of this grievous people, wrought
 After the likeness of their race,
 By faces like thine own besought,
 Thine own blind helpless eyeless face,
 I too, that have nor tongue nor knee
 For prayer, I have a word to thee.

It was for this then, that thy speech
 Was blown about the world in flame
 And men's souls shot up out of reach
 Of fear or lust or thwarting shame—
 That thy faith over souls should pass
 As sea-winds burning the grey grass ?

It was for this, that prayers like these
Should spend themselves about thy feet,
And with hard overlabored knees
Kneeling, these slaves of men should
beat

Bosoms too lean too suckle sons
And fruitless as their orisons ?

It was for this, that men should make
Thy name a fetter on men's necks,
Poor men's made poorer for thy sake,
And women's withered out of sex ?
It was for this, that slaves should be,
Thy word was passed to set men free ?

The nineteenth wave of the ages rolls
Now deathward since thy death and
birth.

Hast thou fed full men's starved-out souls ?
Hast thou brought freedom upon earth ?
Or are there less oppressions done
In this wild world under the sun ?

Nay, if indeed thou be not dead,
Before thy terrene shrine be shaken,
Look down, turn upward, bow thine head ;
O thou that wast of God forsaken,
Look on thine household here, and see
These that have not forsaken thee.

Thy faith is fire upon their lips,
Thy kingdom golden in their hands ;
They scourge us with thy words for whips,
They brand us with thy words for
brands ;

The thirst that made thy dry throat shrink
To their moist mouths commends the drink.

The toothed thorns that bit thy brows
Lighten the weight of gold on theirs ;
Thy nakedness enrobes thy spouse
With the soft sanguine stuff she wears
Whose old limbs use for ointment yet
Thine agony and bloody sweat.

The blinding buffets on thine head
On their crowned heads confirm the
crown ;

Thy scourging dyes their raiment red,
And with thy bands they fasten down
For burial in the blood-bought field
The nations by thy stripes unhealed.

With iron for thy linen bands
And unclean cloths for winding-sheet

They bind the people's nail-pierced hands,
They hide the people's nail-pierced feet :
And what man or what angel known
Shall roll back the sepulchral stone ?

But these have not the rich man's grave
To sleep in when their pain is done.
These were not fit for God to save.
As naked hell-fire is the sun
In their eyes living, and when dead
These have not where to lay their head.

They have no tomb to dig, and hide ;
Earth is not theirs, that they should
sleep.

On all these tombless crucified
No lovers' eyes have time to weep.
So still, for all man's tears and creeds,
The sacred body hangs and bleeds.

Through the left hand a nail is driven,
Faith, and another through the right,
Forged in the fires of hell and heaven,
Fear that puts out the eye of light :
And the feet soiled and scarred and pale
Are pierced with falsehood for a nail.

And priests against the mouth divine
Push their sponge full of poison yet
And bitter blood for myrrh and wine,
And on the same reed is it set
Wherewith before they buffeted
The people's disanointed head.

O sacred head, O desecrate,
O labor-wounded feet and hands,
O blood poured forth in pledge to fate
Of nameless lives in divers lands,
O slain and spent and sacrificed
People, the grey-grown speechless Christ !

Is there a gospel in the red
Old witness of thy wide-mouthed wounds?
From thy blind stricken tongueless head
What desolate evangel sounds
A hopeless note of hope deferred ?
What word, if there be any word ?

O son of man, beneath man's feet
Cast down, O common face of man
Whereon all blows and buffets meet,
O royal, O republican
Face of the people bruised and dumb
And longing till thy kingdom come !

The soldiers and the high priests part
 Thy vesture : all thy days are pierced,
 And all the nights that eat thine heart.
 And that one seamless coat of Christ,
 The freedom of the natural soul,
 They cast their lots for to keep whole.

No fragment of it save the name
 They leave thee for a crown of scorns
 Wherewith to mock thy naked shame
 And forehead bitten through with thorns
 And, marked with sanguine sweat and tears,
 The stripes of eighteen hundred years.

And we seek yet if God or man
 Can loosen thee as Lazarus,
 Bid thee rise up republican
 And save thyself and all of us ;
 But no disciple's tongue can say
 When thou shalt take our sins away.

And mouldering now and hoar with moss
 Between us and the sunlight swings
 The phantom of a Christless cross
 Shadowing the sheltered heads of kings
 And making with its moving shade
 The souls of harmless men afraid.

It creaks and rocks to left and right,
 Consumed of rottenness and rust,
 Worm-eaten of the worms of night,
 Dead as their spirits who put trust,
 Round its base muttering as they sit,
 In the time-cankered name of it.

Thou, in the day that breaks thy prison,
 People, though these men take thy name,
 And hail and hymn thee rearisen,
 Who made songs erewhile of thy shame,
 Give thou not ear ; for these are they
 Whose good day was thine evil day.

Set not thine hand unto their cross
 Give not thy soul up sacrificed.
 Change not the gold of faith for dross
 Of Christian creeds that spit on Christ.
 Let not thy tree of freedom be
 Regrafted from that rotting tree.

This dead God here against my face
 Hath help for no man ; who hath seen,
 The good works of it, or such grace
 As thy grace in it, Nazarene,
 As that from thy live lips which ran
 For man's sake, O thou son of man ?

The tree of faith ingrafted by priests
 Puts its foul foliage out above thee,
 And round it feed man-eating beasts
 Because of whom we are not love thee ;
 Though hearts reach back and memories
 ache,
 We cannot praise thee for their sake.

O hidden face of man, whereover
 The years have woven a viewless veil,
 If thou wast verily man's lover,
 What did thy love or blood avail ?
 Thy blood the priests make poison of,
 And in gold shekels coin thy love.

So when our souls look back to thee
 They sicken, seeing against thy side,
 Too foul to speak of or to see,
 The leprous likeness of a bride,
 Whose kissing lips through his lips grown
 Leave their God rotten to the bone.

When we would see thee man, and know
 What heart thou hadst toward men indeed,
 Lo, thy blood-blackened altars ; lo,
 The lips of priests that pray and feed
 While their own hell's worm curls and licks
 The poison of the crucifix.

Thou bad'st let children come to thee ;
 What children now but curses come ?
 What man in that God can be
 Who sees their worship, and is dumb ?
 No soul that lived, loved, wrought, and
 died,
 Is this their carrion crucified.

Nay, if their God and thou be one,
 If thou and this thing be the same,
 Thou shouldst not look upon the sun ;
 The sun grows haggard at thy name.
 Come down, be done with, cease, give o'er ;
 Hide thyself, strive not, be no more.

TENEBRÆ.

At the chill high tide of the night.

At the turn of the fluctuant hours,
When the waters of time are at height,
In a vision arose on my sight

The kingdoms of earth and the powers.

In a dream without lightening of eyes

I saw them, children of earth,
Nations and races arise,
Each one after his wise,
Signed with the sign of his birth.

Sound was none of their feet.

Light was none of their faces ;
In their lips breath was not, or heat,
But a subtle murmur and sweet
As of water in wan waste places.

Pale as from passionate years,
Years unassuaged of desire,
Sang they soft in mine ears,
Crowned with jewels of tears,
Girt with girdles of fire.

A slow song beaten and broken,
As is were from the dust and the dead,
As of spirits athirst unsloker,
As of things unspeakable spoken,
As of tears unendurable shed.

In the manifold sound remote,
In the molten murmur of song,
There was but a sharp sole note
Alive on the night and afloat,
The cry of the world's heart's wrong.

As the sea in the strait sea-caves,
The sound came straitened and strange ;
A noise of the rending of graves,
A tidal thunder of waves,
The music of death and of change.

"We have waited so long," they say
"For a sound of the God, for a breath,
For a ripple of the refluence of day,
For the fresh bright wind of the fray,
* For the light of the sunrise of death.

"We have prayed not, we, to be strong,
* To fulfil the desire of our eyes ;
—Howbeit they have watched for it long,
Watched, and the night did them wrong,
Yet they say not of day shall it rise ?

"They are fearful and feeble with years,
* Yet they doubt not of day if it be ;
Yea, blinded and beaten with tears,
Yea, sick with foresight of fears,
Yet a little, and hardly, they see.

"We pray not, we, for the palm,
For the fruit ingrafted of the fight,
For the blossom of peace and the balm,
And the tender triumph and calm
Of crownless and weaponless right.

"We pray not, we, to behold
The latter august new birth,
The young day's purple and gold,
And divine, and risen as of old,
The sun-god of Freedom on earth.

"Peace, and world's honor, and fame,
We have sought after none of these
things :
The light of a life like flame
Passing the storm of a name
Shaking the strongholds or kings :

"Nor, fashioned of fire and of air,
The splendor that burns on his head
Who was chiefest in ages that were,
Whose breath blew palaces bare,
Whose eye shone tyrannies dead ;

"All these things in your day
Ye shall see, O our sons, and shall hold
Surely ; but we, in the grey
Twilight, for one thing we pray,
In that day though our memories be cold :

"To feel on our brows as we wait
An air of the morning, a breath
From the springs of the east, from the gate
Whence freedom issues, and fate,
Sorrow and triumph, and death :

"From a land whereon time hath not trod,
Where the spirit is bondless and bare,
And the world's rein breaks, and the rod,
And the soul of a man which is God,
He adores without altar or prayer :

"For alone of herself and her right
She takes, and alone gives grace :
And the colors of things lose light,
And the forms, in the limitless white
Splendor of space without space :

" And the blossom of man from his tomb
Yearns open, the flower that survives ;
And the shadows of changes consume
In the colorless passionate bloom
Of the live light made of our lives :

" Seeing each life given is a leaf,
Of the manifold multiiform flower,
And the least among these, and the chief.
As an ear in the red ripe sheaf
Stored for the harvesting hour.

" O spirit of man, most holy.
The measure of things and the root ;
In our summers and winters a lowly
Seed, putting forth of them slowly
Thy supreme blossom and fruit ;

" In thy sacred and perfect year
The souls that were parcel of thee
In the labor and life of us here
Shall be rays of thy sovereign sphere.
Springs of thy motion shall be.

" There is the fire that was man,
The light that was love, and the breath
That was hope ere deliverance began,

And the wind that was life for a span,
And the birth of new things which is
death

" There, whosoever had light,
And, having, for men's sake gave ;
All that warred against night,
All that were found in the fight
Swift to be slain and to save ;

" Undisbranched of the storms that disroot
us
Of the lures that enthrall unenticed :
The names that exalt and transmute us :
The blood-bright splendour of Brutus,
The snow-bright splendor of Christ.

" There all chains are undone :
Day there seems but as night ;
Spirit and sense are as one
In the light not of star nor of sun :
Liberty there is the light.

" She, sole mother and maker,
Stronger than sorrow, than strife ;
Deathless, though death overtake her ;
Faithful, though faith should forsake her ;
Spirit, and saviour, and life."

HYMN OF MAN

(DURING THE SESSION IN ROME OF THE ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL.)

IN the grey beginning of years, in the
twilight of things that began,
The word of the earth in the ears of the
world, was it God ? was it man ?
The word of the earth to the spheres her
sisters, the note of her song,
The sound of her speech in the ears of the
starry and sisterly throng,
Was it praise or passion or prayer, was it
love or devotion or dread,
When the veils of the shining air first wrapt
her jubilant head ?
When her eyes new-born of the night saw
yet no star out of reach ;
When her maiden mouth was alight with
the flame of musical speech ;
When her virgin feet were set on the terrible
heavenly way,
And her virginal lids were wet with the dew
of the birth of the day :
Eyes that had looked not on time, and ears
that had heard not of death ;

Lips that had learnt not the rhyme of change
and passionate breath,
The rhythmic anguish of growth, and the
motion of mutable things,
Of love that longs and is loth, and plume-
plucked hope without wings,
Passions and pains without number, and
life that runs and is lame,
From slumber again to slumber, the same
race set for the same,
Where the runners outwear each other, but
running with lampless hands
No man takes light from his brother till
blind at the goal he stands :
Ah, did they know, did they dream of it,
counting the cost and the worth ?
The ways of her days, did they seem then
good to the new-souled earth ?
Did her heart rejoice, and the might of her
spirit in her then,
Child yet no child of the night, and mother-
less mother of men ?

Was it Love brake forth flower-fashion, a
 bird with gold on his wings,
 Lovely, her firstborn passion, and impulse
 of firstborn things?
 Was Love that nestling indeed that under
 the plume of the night
 Was hatched and hidden as seed in the
 furrow, and brought forth bright?
 Was it Love lay shut in the shell world-
 shaped, having over him there
 Black world-wide wings that impel the
 might of the night through air?
 And bursting his shell as a bird, night
 shook through her sail-stretched vans,
 And her heart as a water was stirred, and
 its heat was the firstborn man's
 For the waste of the dead void air took
 form of a world at birth;
 And the waters and firmaments were, and
 light, and the life-giving earth
 The beautiful bird unbegotten that night
 brought forth without pain
 In the fathomless years forgotten where-
 over the dead gods reign,
 Was it love, life, godhead, or fate? we say
 the spirit is one
 That moved on the dark to create out of
 darkness the stars and the sun.
 Before the growth was the grower, and
 the seed ere the plant was sown;
 But what was seed of the sower? and the
 grain of him, whence was it grown?
 Foot after foot ye go back and travail and
 make yourselves mad;
 Blind feet that feel for the track where
 highway is none to be had.
 Therefore the God that ye make you is
 grievous, and gives not aid,
 Because it is but for your sake that the
 God of your making is made.
 Thou and I and he are not gods made
 men for a span,
 But God, if a God there be, is the sub-
 stance of men which is man.
 Our lives are as pulses or pores of his man-
 ifold body and breath;
 As waves of his sea on the shores where
 birth is the beacon of death.
 We men, the multiform features of man,
 whatsoever we be,
 Recreate him of whom we are creatures,
 and all we only are he.
 For each man of all men is God, but God
 is the fruit of the whole;
 Indivisible spirit and blood, indiscernible
 body from soul.

Not men's but man's is the glory of god-
 head, the kingdom of time,
 The mountainous ages made hoary with
 snows for the spirit to climb.
 A God with the world inwound whose
 clay to his footsole clings;
 A manifold God fast-bound as with iron
 of adverse things.
 A soul that labours and lives, an emotion,
 a strenuous breath,
 From the flame that its own mouth gives
 reillumed and refreshed with death.
 In the sea whereof centuries are waves the
 live God plunges and swims;
 His bed is in all men's graves, but the
 worm hath not hold on his limbs.
 Night puts out not his eyes, nor time
 sheds change on his head;
 With such fire as the stars of the skies are
 the roots of his heart are fed.
 Men are the thoughts passing through it,
 the veins that fulfil it with blood,
 With spirit of sense to renew it as springs
 fulfilling a flood.
 Men are the heartbeats of man, the plumes
 that feather his wings,
 Storm-worn, since being began, with the
 wind and thunder of things.
 Things are cruel and blind; their strength
 detains and deforms;
 And the wearying wings of the mind still
 beat up the stream of their storms.
 Still, as one swimming up stream, they
 strike out blind in the blast,
 In thunders of vision and dream, and
 lightning of future and past.
 We are baffled and caught in the current
 and bruised upon edges of shoals;
 As weeds or as reeds in the torrent of
 things are the wind-shaken souls.
 Spirit by spirit goes under, a foam-bell's
 bubble of breath,
 That blows and opens in sunder and blurs
 not the mirror of death.
 For a worm or a thorn in his path is a
 man's soul quenched as a flame;
 For his lust of an hour or his wrath shall
 the worm and the man be the same.
 O God sore stricken of things! they have
 wrought him a raiment of pain;
 Can a God shut eyelids and wings at a
 touch on the nerves of the brain?
 O shamed and sorrowful God, whose force
 goes out at a blow!

What world shall shake at his nod ? at his
 coming what wilderness glow ?
 What help in the work of his hands ? what
 light in the track of his feet ?
 His days are snowflakes or sands, with cold
 to consume him and heat.
 He is servant with Change for lord, and for
 wages he hath to his hire
 Folly and force, and a sword that devours,
 and a ravening fire,
 From the bed of his birth to his grave he is
 driven as a wind at their will ;
 Lest Change bow down as his slave, and
 the storm and the sword be still ;
 Lest earth spread open her wings to the
 sunward, and sing with the spheres ;
 Lest man be master of things, to prevail on
 their forces and fears.
 By the spirit are things overcome ; they are
 stark, and the spirit hath breath ;
 It hath speech, and their forces are dumb ;
 it is living and things are of death.
 But they know not the spirit for master,
 they feel not force from above,
 While man makes love to disaster, and
 woos desolation with love.
 Yea, himself too hath made himself chains,
 and his own hands plucked out his
 eyes ;
 For his own soul only constrains him, his
 own mouth only denies
 The herds of kings and their hosts and the
 flocks of the high priests bow
 To a master whose face is a ghost's ; O
 thou that wast God, is it thou ?
 Thou madest man in the garden ; thou
 temptedst man, and he fell ;
 Thou gavest him poison and pardon for
 blood and burnt-offering to sell.
 Thou hast sealed thine elect to salvation,
 fast locked with faith for the key ;
 Make now for thyself expiation, and be
 thine atonement for thee.
 Ah, thou that darkenest heaven—ah, thou
 that bringest a sword—
 By the crimes of thine hands unforgiven
 they beseech thee to hear them, O
 Lord.
 By the balefires of ages that burn for thine
 incense, by creed and by rood,
 By the famine and passion that yearn and
 that hunger to find of thee food,
 By the children that asked at thy throne of
 the priests that were fat with thine hire
 For bread, and thou gavest a stone ; for
 light, and thou madest them fire ;

By the kiss of thy peace like a snake's kiss,
 that leaves the soul rotten at root ;
 By the savors of gibbets and stakes thou
 hast planted to bear to thee fruit ;
 By torture and terror and treason, that
 make to thee weapons and wings ;
 By thy power upon men for a season, made
 out of the malice of things ;
 O thou that hast built thee a shrine of the
 madness of man and his shame,
 And hast hung in the midst for a sign of his
 worship the lamp of thy name ;
 That hast shown him for heaven in a vision
 a void world's shadow and shell,
 And hast fed thy delight and derision with
 fire of belief as of hell ;
 That has fleshed on the souls that believe
 thee the fang of the death-worm fear,
 With anguish of dreams to deceive them
 whose faith cries out in thine ear ;
 By the face of the spirit confounded before
 thee and humbled in dust,
 By the dread wherewith life was astounded
 and shamed out of sense of its trust,
 By the scourges of doubt and repentance
 that fell on the soul at thy nod,
 Thou art judged, O judge, and the sentence
 is gone forth against thee, O God.
 Thy slave that slept is awake ; thy slave
 but slept for a span ;
 Yea, man thy slave shall unmake thee, who
 made thee lord over man.
 For his face is set to the east, his feet on
 the past and its dead ;
 The sun rears is his priest, and the heat
 thereof hallows his head.
 His eyes take part in the morning ; his
 spirit outsoundeth the sea
 Asks no more witness or warning from
 temple or tripod or tree.
 He hath set the centuries at union ; the
 night is afraid at his name ;
 Equal with life, in communion with death,
 he hath found them the same.
 Past the wall unsurmounted that bars out
 our vision with iron and fire
 He hath sent forth his soul for the stars to
 comply with and suns to conspire.
 His thought takes flight for the centre
 wherethrough it hath part in the whole ;
 The abysses forbid it not enter : the stars
 make room for the soul.
 Space is the soul's to inherit ; the night is
 hers as the day ;
 Lo, saith man, this is my spirit ; how shall
 not the worlds make way ?

Space is thought's, and the wonders thereof, and the secret of space ;
 Is thought not more than the thunders and lightnings ? shall thought give place ?
 Is the body not more than the vesture, the life not more than the meat ?
 The will than the word or the gesture, the heart than the hands or the feet ?
 Is the tongue not more than the speech is ? the head not more than the crown ?
 And if higher than is heaven be the reach of the soul, shall not heaven bow down ?
 Time, father of life, and more great than than the life it begat and began,
 Earth's keeper and heaven's and their fate, lives, thinks, and hath substance in man.
 Time's motion that throbs in his blood is the thought that gives heart to the skies,
 And the springs of the fire that is food to the sunbeams are light to his eyes.
 The minutes that beat with his heart are the words to which worlds keep chime,
 And the thought in his pulses is part of the blood and the spirit of time.
 He saith to the ages, Give ; and his soul foregoes not her share ;
 Who are ye that forbid him to live, and would feed him with heavenlier air ?
 Will ye feed him with poisonous dust, and restore him with hemlock for drink,
 Till he yield you his soul up in trust, and have heart not to know or to think ?
 He hath stirred him, and found out the flaw in his fetters, and cast them behind ;
 His soul to his soul is a law, and his mind is a light to his mind.
 The seal of his knowledge is sure, the truth and his spirit are wed ;
 Men perish, but man shall endure ; lives die, but the life is not dead.
 He hath sight of the secrets of season, the roots of the years and the fruits ;
 His soul is at one with the reason of things that is sap to the roots.
 He can hear in their changes a sound as the conscience of consonant spheres ;
 He can see through the years flowing round him the law lying under the years.
 Who are ye that would land him with curses and blind him with vapor of prayer ?
 Your might is as night that disperses when light is alive in the air.
 The bow of your godhead is broken, the arm of your conquest is stayed ;

Though ye call down God to bear token, for fear of you none is afraid.
 Will ye turn back times, and the courses of stars, and the season of souls ?
 Shall God's breath dry up the sources that feed time full as it rolls ?
 Nay, cry on him then till he show you a sign, till he lift up a rod ;
 Hath he made not the nations to know him of old if indeed he be God ?
 Is no heat of him left in the ashes of thousands burnt up for his sake ?
 Can prayer not rekindle the flashes that shone in his face from the stake ?
 Cry aloud ; for your God is a God and a Saviour ; cry, make yourselves lean ;
 Is he drunk or asleep, that the rod of his wrath is unfelt and unseen ?
 Is the fire of his old loving-kindness gone out, that his pyres are acold ?
 Hath he gazed on himself unto blindness, who made men blind to behold ?
 Cry out, for his kingdom is shaken ; cry out, for the people blaspheme ;
 Cry aloud till his godhead awaken ; what doth he to sleep and to dream ?
 Cry, cut yourselves, gash you with knives and with scourges, heap on you dust ;
 Is his life but as other gods' lives ? is not this the Lord God of your trust ?
 Is not this the great God of your sires, that with souls and with bodies was fed,
 And the world was on flame with his fires ?
 O fools, he was God, and is dead.
 He will hear not again the strong crying of earth in his ears as before,
 And the fume of his multitudes dying shall flatter his nostrils no more.
 By the spirit he ruled as his slave is he slain who was mighty to slay,
 And the stone that is sealed on his grave he shall rise not and roll not away.
 Yea, weep to him, lift up your hands ; he your eyes as a fountain of tears ;
 Where he stood there is nothing that stands ; if he call, there is no man that hears.
 He hath doffed his king's raiment of lies now the wane of his kingdom is come ;
 Ears hath he, and hears not ; and eyes, and he sees not ; and mouth, and is dumb.
 His red king's raiment is ripped from him naked, his staff broken down ;
 And the signs of his empire are stripped from him shuddering ; and where is his crown ?
 And in vain by the wellsprings refrozen ye cry for the warmth of his sun—

<p>O God, the Lord God of thy chosen, thy will in thy kingdom be done. Kingdom and will hath he none in him left him, nor warmth in his breath ; Till his corpse be cast out of the sun will ye know not the truth of his death ? Surely, ye say, he is strong, though the times be against him and men ; Yet a little, ye say, and how long, till he come to show judgment again ? Shall God then die as the beasts die ? who is it hath broken his rod ? O God, Lord God of thy priests, rise up now and show thyself God.</p>	<p>They cry out, thine elect, thine aspirants to heavenward, whose faith is as flame ; O thou the Lord God of our tyrants, they call thee, their God, by thy name. By thy name that in hell-fire was written, and burned at the point of thy sword Thou art smitten, thou God, thou art smit ten ; thy death is upon thee, O Lord And the love-song of earth as thou diest resounds through the wind of her wings— Glory to Man in the highest ! for Man is master of things.</p>
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THE PILGRIMS.

<p>Who is your lady of love, O ye that pass Singing ? and is it for sorrow of that which was That ye sing sadly, or dream of what shall be ? For gladly at once and sadly it seems ye sing. —Our lady of love by you is unbeholden ; For hands she hath none, nor eyes, nor lips, nor golden Treasure of hair, nor face nor form ; but we That love, we know her more fair than anything.</p> <p>—Is she a queen, having great gifts to give ? —Yea, these ; that whoso hath seen her shall not live Except he serve her sorrowing, with strange pain, Travail and bloodshedding and bitterer tears ; And when she bids die he shall surely die. And he shall leave all things under the sky And go forth naked under sun and rain And work and wait and watch out all his years.</p> <p>—Hath she on earth no place of habitation ? —Age to age calling, nation answering nation, Cries out, Where is she ? and there is none to say ; For if she be not in the spirit of men.</p>	<p>For if in the inward soul she hath no place, In vain they cry unto her, seeking her face. In vain their mouths make much of her ; for they Cry with vain tongues, till the heart lives again</p> <p>—O ye that follow, and have ye no repen- tance ? For on your brows is written a mortal sentence, An hieroglyph of sorrow, a fiery sign, That in your lives ye shall not pause or rest, Nor have the sure sweet common love, nor keep Friends and safe days nor joy of life nor sleep. —These have we not, who have one thing, the dwine Face and clear eyes of faith and fruit ful breast</p> <p>—And ye shall die before your thrones be won. —Yea, and the changed world and the liberal sun Shall move and shine without us, and we live Dead ; but if she too move on earth and live, But if the old world with all the old irons rent</p>
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Laugh and give thanks, shall we be not content?

Nay, we shall rather live, we shall not die,

Life being so little and death so good to give.

And these men shall forget you--Yea, but we

Shall be a part of the earth and the ancient sea,

And heaven high air august, and awful fire,

And all things good; and no man's heart shall beat

But somewhat in it of our blood once shed
Shall quiver and quicken, as now in us the dead

Blood of men slain and the old same life's desire

Plants in their fiery footprints our fresh feet.

But ye that might be clothed with all things pleasant,

Ye are foolish that put off the fair soft present,

That clothe yourselves with the cold future air;

When mother and father and tender sister and brother

And the old live love that was shall be as ye,

Dust, and no fruit of loving life shall be.

—She shall be yet who is more than all these were,

Than sister or wife or father unto us or mother.

—Is this worth life, is this, to win for wages?

Lo, the dead mouths of the awful grey grown ages,

The venerable, in the past that is their prison,

In the outer darkness, in the unopening grave,

Laugh, knowing how many as ye now say have said,

How many, and all are fallen, are fallen and dead :

Shall ye dead rise, and these dead have not risen :

—Not we but she, who is tender and swift to save.

—Are ye not weary and faint not by the way

Seeing night by night devoured of day by day,

Seeing hour by hour consumed in sleepless fire?

Sleepless; and ye too, when shall ye too sleep?

—We are weary in heart and head, in hands and feet,

And surely more than all things sleep were sweet,

Than all things save the inexorable desire
Which whoso knoweth shall neither faint nor weep

—Is this so sweet that one were fain to follow?

Is this so sure where all men's hopes are hollow,

Even this your dream, that by much tribulation

Ye shall make whole flawed hearts, and bowed necks straight?

—Nay though our life were blind, our death were fruitless,

Not therefore were the whole world's high hope rootless :

But man to man, nation would turn to nation,

And the old life live, and the old great world be great.

—Pass on then and pass by us and let us be,
For what light think ye after life to see?

And if the world fare better will ye know?

And if man triumph who shall seek you and say?

—Enough of light is this for one life's span,
That all men born are mortal, but not man:

And we men bring death lives by night to sow,

That man may reap and eat and live by day.

ARMAND BARBÈS.

I.

FIRE out of heaven, a flower of perfect
 fire,
 That where the roots of life are had its
 root
 And where the fruits of time are brought
 forth fruit ;
A faith made flesh, a visible desire
 That heard the yet unbreathing years re-
 spire,
 And speech break forth of centuries that
 sit mute
 Beyond all feeble footprint of pursuit ;
That touched the highest of hope and went
 up higher ;
A heart love-wounded whereto 'love was
 law,
A soul reproachless without fear or flaw.
 A shining spirit without shadow of shame,
A memory made of all men's love and
 awe,
 Being disembodied, so thou be the same,
What need, O soul, to sign thee with thy
 name ?

II.

All woes of all men sat upon thy soul
 And all their wrongs were heavy on thy
 head ;
 With all their wounds thy heart was
 pierced and bled.
 And in thy spirit as in a mourning scroll
 The world's huge sorrows were inscribed
 by roll,
 All theirs on earth who serve and faint
 for bread,
 All banished men's, all theirs in prison
 dead,
 Thy love had heart and sword-hand for the
 whole.
 "This was my day of glory," didst thou say,
 When, by the scaffold thou hadst hope to
 climb
 For thy faith's sake they brought thee re-
 spite ; "Nay,
 I shall not die then, I have missed my day."
 O hero, O our help, O head sublime,
 Thy day shall be commensurate with
 time.

QUIA MULTUM AMAVIT.

AM I not he that hath made thee and be-
 gotten thee,
 I, God, the spirit of man ?
 Wherefore now these eighteen years hast
 thou forgotten me,
 From whom thy life began ?
 Thy life-blood and thy life-breath and thy
 beauty,
 Thy might of hands and feet,
 Thy soul made strong for divinity of duty
 And service which was sweet.
Through the red sea brimmed with blood
 didst thou not follow me,
 As one that walks in trance ?
Was the storm strong to break or the sea
 to swallow thee,
 When thou wast free and France ?
I am Freedom, God and man, O France,
 that plead with thee ;
 How long now shall I plead ?

Was I not with thee in travail, and in need
 with thee,
 Thy sore travail and need ?
 Thou wast fairest and first of my virgin-
 vested daughters,
 Fairest and foremost thou ;
 And thy breast was white, though thy hands
 were red with slaughters,
 Thy breast, a harlot's now.
 O foolish virgin and fair among the fallen,
 A ruin where satyrs dance,
 A garden wasted for beasts to crawl and
 brawl in,
 What hast thou done with France ?
 Where is she who bared her bosom but to
 thunder,
 Her brow to storm and flame,
 And before her face was the red sea cloven
 in sunder,
 And all its waves made tame ?

And the surf wherein the broad-based rocks
 were shaking
 She saw far off divide,
 At the blast of the breath of the battle
 blown and breaking,
 And weight of wind and tide ;
 And the ravin and the ruin of throned
 nations
 And every royal race.
 And the kingdoms and kings from the state
 of their high stations
 That fell before her face
 Yea, great was the fall of them, all that rose
 against her,
 From the earth's old-historied
 heights ;
 For my hands were fire, and my wings as
 walls that fenced her,
 Mine eyes as pilot-lights.
 Not as guerdons given of kings the gifts I
 brought her,
 Not strengths that pass away ;
 But my heart, my breath of life, O France,
 O daughter,
 I gave thee in that day,
 Yea, the heart's blood of a very God I gave
 thee,
 Breathed in thy mouth his breath ;
 Was my word as a man's having no more
 strength to save thee
 From this worse thing than death ?
 Didst thou dream of it only, the day that I
 stood nigh thee,
 Was all its light a dream ?
 When that iron surf roared backwards and
 went by thee
 Unscathed of storm or stream :
 When thy sons rose up and thy young men
 stood together,
 One equal face of fight,
 And my flag swam high as the swimming
 sea-foam's feather.
 Laughing, a lamp of light ?
 Ah the lordly laughter and light of it, that
 lightened
 Heaven-high, the heaven's whole
 length !
 Ah the hearts of heroes pierced, the bright
 lips whitened
 Of strong men in their strength !
 Ah the banner-poles, the stretch of straight-
 ening streamers
 Straining their full reach out !
 Ah the men's hands making true the dreams
 of dreamers,
 The hopes brought forth in doubt !

Ah the noise of horse, the charge and thun-
 der of drumming,
 And swaying and sweep of swords ;
 Ah the light that led them through of the
 world's life coming,
 Clear of its lies and lords !
 By the lightning of the lips of guns whose
 flashes
 Made plain the strayed world's way.
 By the flame that left her dead old sins in
 ashes,
 Swept out of sight of day ;
 By thy children whose bare feet were shod
 with thunder,
 Their bare hands mailed with fire ;
 By the faith that went with them, waking
 fear and wonder.
 Heart's love and high desire ;
 By the tumult of the waves of nations wak-
 ing
 Blind in the loud wide night ;
 By the wind that went on the world's waste
 waters, making
 Their marble darkness white,
 As the flash of the flakes of the foam flared
 lamplike, leaping
 From wave to gladdening wave,
 Making wide the fast-shut eyes of thralldom
 sleeping
 The sleep of the unclean grave ;
 By the fire of equality, terrible, devouring,
 Divine, that brought forth good ;
 By the lands it purged and wasted and left
 flowering
 With bloom of brotherhood ;
 By the lips of fraternity that for love's sake
 uttered
 Fierce words and fires of death,
 But the eyes were deep as love's and the
 fierce lips fluttered
 With love's own living breath ;
 By the weaponed hands, brows helmed, and
 bare feet spurning
 The bared head of a king :
 By the storm of sunrise round thee risen and
 burning,
 Why hast thou done this thing ?
 Thou hast mixed thy limbs with the son of
 a harlot a stranger
 Mouth to mouth limb to limb,
 Thou, bride of a God, because of the brides
 man Danger
 To bring forth seed to him.
 For thou thoughtest only the terrible bride
 groom wakes me.
 When I would sleep, to go ;

The fire of his mouth consumes, and the red
 kiss shakes me,
 More bitter than a blow.
 Rise up, my beloved, go forth to meet the
 stranger,
 Put forth thine arm, he saith :
 Fear thou not at all though the bridesman
 should be Danger,
 The bridesmaid should be Death
 I the bridegroom, am I not with thee, O
 bridal nation
 O wedded France to strive ?
 To destroy the sins of the earth with divine
 devastation,
 Till none be left alive ?
 Lo her growths of sons, foliage of men and
 frondage,
 Broad boughs of the old-world tree
 With iron of shame and with pruning-hooks
 of bondage
 They are shorn from sea to sea.
 Lo, I set wings to thy feet that have been
 wingless,
 Till the utter race be run ;
 Till the priestless temples cry to the thrones
 made kingless,
 Are we not also undone ?
 Till the immeasurable Republic arise and
 enlighten
 Above these quick and dead,
 And her awful robes be changed and her
 red robes whiten,
 Her warring-robes of red
 But thou wouldst not, saying, I am weary
 and faint to follow.
 Let me lie down and rest ;
 And hast sought out shame to sleep with,
 mire to wallow,

Yea, a much fouler breast :
 And thine own hast made prostitute, sold
 and shamed and bared it,
 Thy bosom which was mine,
 And the bread of the world I gave thee
 hast soiled, and shared it
 Among these snakes and swine.
 As a harlot thou wast handled and polluted,
 Thy faith held light as foam,
 That thou sentest men thy sons, thy sons
 imbruted,
 To slay thine elder Rome.
 Therefore, O harlot, I gave thee to the
 accurst one,
 By night to be defiled,
 To thy second shame, and a fouler than
 the first one,
 That got thee first with child.
 Yet I know thee turning back now to be-
 hold me,
 To bow thee and make thee bare,
 Not for sin's sake but penitence, by my feet
 to hold me,
 And wipe them with thine hair.
 And sweet ointment of thy grief thou hast
 brought thy master,
 And set before thy lord,
 From a box of flawed and broken alabaster,
 Thy broken spirit, poured
 And love-offerings, tears and perfumes,
 hast thou given me,
 To reach my feet and touch ;
 Therefore thy sins, which are many, are
 forgiven thee,
 Because thou hast loved much.

18 brumaire, an 78.

GENESIS.

In the outer world that was before this
 earth,
 That was before all shape or space was
 born,
 Before the blind first hour of time had
 birth,
 Before night knew the moonlight or the
 morn ;
 Yea, before any world had any light,
 Or anything called God or man drew
 breath,

Slowly the strong sides of the heaving
 night
 Moved, and brought forth the strength
 of life and death.
 And the sad shapeless horror increate
 That was all things and one thing, with
 out fruit,
 Limit, or law ; where love was none, nor
 hate,
 Where no leaf came to blossom from no
 root ;

The very darkness that time knew not of,
Nor God laid hand on, nor was man
found there,
Ceased, and was cloven in several shapes ;
above
Light, and night under, and fire, earth,
water, and air.

Sunbeams and starbeams, and all colored
things,
All forms and all similitudes began ;
And death, the shadow cast by life's wide
wings,
And God, the shade cast by the soul of
man.

Then between shadow and substance, night
and light,
Then between birth and death, and deeds
and days
The illimitable embrace and the amorous
fight
That of itself begets, bears, rears, and
slays,

The immortal war of mortal things, that is
Labor and life and growth and good and
ill,
The mild antiphonies that melt and kiss,
The violent symphonies that meet and
kill,

All nature of all things began to be.
But chiefest in the spirit (beast or man,
Planet of heaven or blossom of earth or sea)
The divine contraries of life began.

For the great labor of growth, being many,
is one ;
One thing the white death and the ruddy
birth ;
The invisible air and the all-beholden sun,
And barren water and many-childed earth :

And these things are made manifest in men
From the beginning forth unto this day :

Time writes and life records them, and again
Death seals them lest the record pass
away.

For if death were not, then should growth
not be,
Change, nor the life of good nor evil things ;
Nor were there night at all nor light to see,
Nor water of sweet nor water of bitter
springs.

For in each man and each year that is born
Are sown the twin seeds of the strong
twin powers ;
The white seed of the fruitful helpful morn,
The black seed of the barren hurtful
hours.

And he that of the black seed eateth fruit,
To him the savor as honey shall be sweet ;
And he in whom the white seed hath struck
root,
He shall have sorrow and trouble and
tears for meat.

And him whose lips the sweet fruit hath
made red
In the end men loathe and make his
name a rod ;
And him whose mouth on the unsweet fruit
hath fed
In the end men follow and know for very
God.

And of these twain, the black seed and the
white,
All things come forth ending of men and
done ;
And still the day is great with child of night,
And still the black night labors with the
sun.

And each man and each year that lives on
earth
Turns hither or thither, and hence or
thence is fed ;
And as a man before was from his birth,
So shall a man be after among the dead.

TO WALT WHITMAN IN AMERICA.

SEND but a song oversea for us.
 Heart of their hearts who are free,
 Heart of their singer, to be for us
 More than our singing can be ;
 Ours, in the tempest at error,
 With no light but the twilight of terror ;
 Send us a song oversea !

Sweet-smelling of pine-leaves and grasses,
 And blown as a tree through and through
 With the winds of thee keen mountain-
 passes,
 And tender as sun-smitten dew ;
 Sharp-tongued as the winter that shakes
 The wastes of your limitless lakes,
 Wide-eyed as the sea-line's blue.

O strong-winged soul with prophetic
 Lips hot with the bloodbeats of song
 With tremor of heartstrings magnetic,
 With thoughts as thunders in throng,
 With consonant ardors of chords
 That pierce men's souls as with swords
 And hale them hearing along,

Make us too music, to be with us
 As a word from a world's heart warm,
 To sail the dark as a sea with us,
 Full-sailed, outsing the storm,
 A song to put fire in our ears
 Whose burning shall burn up tears,
 Whose sign bid battle reform ;

A note in the ranks of a clarion,
 A word in the wind of cheer,
 To consume as with lightning the carrion
 That makes time foul for us here ;
 In the air that our dead things infest
 A blast of the breath of the west,
 Till east way as west way is clear.

Out of the sun beyond sunset,
 From the evening whence morning shall
 be,
 With the rollers in measureless onset,
 With the van of the storming sea,
 With the world-wide wind, with the breath
 That breaks ships driven upon death,
 With the passion of all things free,

With the sea-steeds footless and frantic,
 White myriads for death to bestride
 In the charge of the ruining Atlantic
 Where deaths by regiments ride,
 With clouds and clamors of waters,
 With a long note shriller than slaughter's
 On the furrowless fields world-wide,

With terror, with ardor and wonder,
 With the soul of the season that wakes
 When the weight of a whole year's thunder
 In the tidestream of autumn breaks,
 Let the flight of the wide-winged word
 Come over, come in and be heard,
 Take form and fire for our sakes.

For a continent bloodless with travail
 Here toils and brawls as it can,
 And the web of it who shall unravel
 Of all that peer on the plan ;
 Would fain grow men, but they grow not,
 And fain be free, but they know not
 One name for freedom and man ?

One name, not twain for division ;
 One thing, not twain, from the birth ;
 Spirit and substance and vision,
 Worth more than worship is worth ;
 Unbeheld, unadored, undivined,
 The cause, the centre, the mind,
 The secret and sense of the earth.

Here as a weakling in irons,
 Here as a weanling in bands
 As a prey that the stake-net environs,
 Our life that we looked for stands ;
 And the man-child naked and dear,
 Democracy, turns on us here
 Eyes trembling with tremulous hands.

It sees not what season shall bring to it
 Sweet fruit of its bitter desire ;
 Few voices it hears yet sing to it,
 Few pulses of hearts reaspire ;
 Foresees not time, nor forehears
 The noises of imminent years,
 Earthquake, and thunder, and fire :

When crowned and weaponed and curbless
 It shall walk without helm or shield
 The bare burnt furrows and herbless
 Of wars last flame-stricken field,
 Till godlike, equal with time,
 It stand in the sun sublime,
 In the godhead of man revealed.

Round your people and over them
 Light like raiment is drawn,
 Close as a garment to cover them
 Wrought not of mail nor of lawn :
 Here, with hope hardly to wear,
 Naked nations and bare
 Swim, sink, strike out for the dawn.

Chains are here, and a prison,
 Kings, and subjects, and shame :
 If the God upon you be arisen.
 How should our songs be the same ?
 How in confusion of change,
 How shall we sing, in a strange
 Land songs praising his name ?

God is buried and dead to us
 Even the spirit of earth.
 Freedom : so have they said to us,
 Some with mocking and mirth,
 Some with heartbreak and tears :
 And a God without eyes, without ears
 Who shall sing of him dead in the birth ?

The earth god Freedom, the lonely
 Face lightening, the footprint unshod.
 Not as one man crucified only
 Nor scourged with but one life's rod :
 The soul that is substance or nations,
 Reincarnate with fresh generations ;
 The great god Man, which is God.

But in weariest of years and obscurest
 Doth it live not at heart of all things
 The one God and one spirit, a purest
 Life, fed from unstanchable springs :
 Within love ; within hatred it is,
 And its seed in the stripe as the kiss,
 And in slaves is the germ, and in kings.

Freedom we call it, for holier
 Name of the soul's there is none ;
 Surelier it labors, if slower,
 Than the metres of star or of sun
 Slowlier than life unto breath
 Surelier than time unto death,
 It moves till its labor be done.

Till the motion be done and the measure
 Circling through season and clime.
 Slumber and sorrow and pleasure,
 Vision of virtue and crime ;
 Till consummate with conquering eyes,
 A soul disembodied, it rise
 From the body transfigured of time.

Till it rise and remain and take station
 With the stars of the world that rejoice ;
 Till the voice of its heart's exultation
 Be as theirs an invariable voice
 By no discord of evil estranged,
 By no pause by no breach in it changed
 By no clash in the chord of its choice.

It is one with the world's generations,
 With the spirit the star and the sod :
 With the kingless and king-stricken nation,
 With the cross, and the chain, and the rod
 The most high, the most secret, most lonely,
 The earth-soul Freedom, that only
 Lives, and that only is God

CHRISTMAS ANTIPHONES.

I.

IN CHURCH.

THOU whose birth on earth
 Angels sang to men,
 While thy stars made mirth,
 Saviour, at thy birth.
 This day born again ;

As this night was bright
 With thy cradle ray,

Very light of light,
 Turn the wild world's night
 To thy perfect day.

God whose feet made sweet
 Those wild ways they trod,
 From thy fragrant feet
 Staining field and street
 With the blood of God ;

God whose breast is rest
 In the time of strife,

In thy secret breast
Sheltering souls oppress
From the heat of life ;

God whose eyes are skies
Love-lit as with spheres
By the lights that rise
To thy watching eyes,
Orbed lights of tears ;

God whose heart hath part
In all grief that is,
Was no man's, the dart
That went through thine heart,
And the wound not his ?

Where the pale souls wail,
Held in the bonds of death,
Where all spirits quail,
Came thy Godhead pale
Still from human breath—

Pale from life and strife,
Wan with manhood, came
Forth of mortal life,
Pierced as with a knife,
Scarred as with a flame.

Thou the Word and Lord
In all time and space
Heard, beheld, adored,
With all ages poured
Forth before thy face,

Lord, what worth in earth
Drew thee down to die ?
What therein was worth,
Lord, thy death and birth ?
What beneath thy sky ?

Light above all love
By thy love was lit,
And brought down the Dove
Feathered from above
With the wings of it.

From the height of night,
Was not thine the star
That led forth with might
By no wordly light
Wise men from afar ?

Yet the wise men's eyes
Saw thee not more clear

Than they saw thee rise
Who in shepherd's guise
Drew as poor men near.

Yet thy poor endure,
And are with us yet,
Be thy name a sure
Refuge for thy poor
Whom men's eyes forget.

Thou whose ways we praise,
Clear alike and dark,
Keep our works and ways
This and all thy days
Safe inside thine ark.

Who shall keep thy sheep,
Lord, and lose not one ?
Who save one shall keep,
Lest the shepherds sleep ?
Who beside the Son ?

From the grave-deep wave,
From the sword and flame,
Thou, even thou, shalt save
Souls of king and slave
Only by thy Name.

Light not born with morn
Or her fires above,
Jesus virgin-born,
Held of men in scorn,
Turn their scorn to love.

Thou whose face gives grace
As the sun's doth heat,
Let thy sunbright face
Lighten time and space
Here beneath thy feet.

Bid our peace increase,
Thou that madest morn ;
Bid oppressions cease ;
Bid the night be peace ;
Bid the day be born.

II.

OUTSIDE CHURCH.

WE whose days and ways
All the night makes dark,
What day shall we praise
Of these weary days
That our life-drops mark ?

We whose mind is blind,
Fed with hope of nought ;
Wastes of worn mankind,
Without heart or mind,
Without meat or thought ;

We with strife of life
Worn till all life cease,
Want, a whetted knife,
Sharpening strife on strife,
How should we love peace ?

Ye whose meat is sweet
And your wine-cup red,
Us beneath your feet
Hunger grinds as wheat,
Grinds to make you bread.

Ye whose night is bright
With soft rest and heat,
Clothed like day with light,
Us the naked night
Slays from street to street.

Hath your God no rod,
That ye tread so light ?
Man on us as God,
God as man hath rod,
Trode us down with might.

We that one by one
Bleed from either's rod,
What for us hath done
Man beneath the sun,
What for us hath God ?

We whose blood is food
Given your wealth to feed,
From the Christless rood
Red with no God's blood,
But with man's indeed ;

How shall we that see
Night-long overhead
Life, the flowerless tree,
Nailed whereon as we
Were our fathers dead—

We whose ear can hear,
Not whose tongue can name.
Famine, ignorance, fear.
Bleeding tear by tear
Year by year of shame,

Till the dry life die
Out of bloodless breast

Out of beamless eye,
Out of mouths that cry
Till death feed with rest—

How shall we as ye,
Though ye bid us, pray ?
Though ye call, can we
Hear you call, or see,
Though ye show us day ?

We whose name is shame,
We whose souls walk bare,
Shall we call the same
God as ye by name,
Teach our lips your prayer ?

God, forgive and give,
For His sake who died ?
Nay, for ours who live,
How shall we forgive
Thee then, on our side ?

We whose right to light
Whom the blind beams smite
Heaven's high noon denie-,
That for you shine bright,
And but burn our eyes,

With what dreams of beams
Shall we build up day,
At what sourceless streams
Seek to drink in dreams
Ere they pass away ?

In what street shall meet,
At what market-place,
Your feet and our feet,
With one goal to greet,
Having run one race ?

What one hope shall ope
For us all as one
One some horoscope,
Where the soul sees hope
That outburns the sun ?

At what shrine what wine,
At what board what bread,
Salt as blood or brine,
Shall we share in sign
How we poor were fed ?

In what hour what power
Shall we pray for morn,
If your perfect hour,
When all day bears flower,
Not for us is born ?

III.

BEYOND CHURCH.

YE that weep in sleep,
 Souls and bodies bound,
 Ye that all night keep
 Watch for change, and weep
 That no change is found ;

Ye that cry and die,
 And the world goes on
 Without ear or eye,
 And the days go by
 Till all days are gone ;

Man shall do for you,
 Men the sons of man,
 What no God would do
 That they sought unto
 While the blind years ran.

Brotherhood of good,
 Equal laws and rights
 Freedom, whose sweet food
 Feeds the multitude
 All their days and nights,

With the bread full-fed
 Of her body blest
 And the soul's wine shed
 From her table spread
 Where the world is guest,

Mingling me and thee,
 When like light of eyes
 Flashed through thee and me
 Truth shall make us free,
 Liberty make wise ;

These are they whom day
 Follows and gives light
 Whence they see to slay
 Night, and burn away
 All the seed of night.

What of thine and mine,
 What of want and wealth,
 When one faith is wine
 For my heart and thine
 And one draught is health?

For no sect elect
 Is the soul's wine poured
 And her table decked ;
 Whom should man reject
 From man's common board ?

Gods refuse and choose ;
 Grudge and sell and spare ;
 None shall man refuse,
 None of all men lose,
 None leave out of care.

No man's might of sight
 Knows that hour before ;
 No man's hand hath might
 To put back that light
 For one hour the more.

Not though all men call,
 Kneeling with void hands,
 Shall they see light fall
 Till it come for all
 Tribes of men and lands.

No desire brings fire
 Down from heaven by prayer,
 Though man's vain desire
 Hang faith's wind struck lyre
 Out in tuneless air

One hath breath and saith
 What the tune shall be—
 Time, who puts his breath
 Into life and death,
 Into earth and sea.

To and fro years flow,
 Fill their tides and ebb,
 As his fingers go
 Weaving to and fro
 One unfinished web.

All the range of change
 Hath its bounds therein,
 All the lives that range
 All the byways strange
 Named of death or sin.

Star from far to star
 Speaks, and white moons wake,
 Watchful from afar
 What the night's ways are
 For the morning's sake.

Many names and flames
 Pass and flash and fall,
 Night-begotten names,
 And the night reclaims,
 As she bare them, all.

But the sun is one,
And the sun's name Right ;
And when light is none
Saving of the sun,
All men shall have light.

All shall see and be
Parcel of the morn ;
Ay, though blind were we,
None shall choose but see
When that day is born.

A NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE.

TO JOSEPH MAZZINI.

"Send the stars light. but send not love to me."—*Shelley*.

1.

OUT of the dawning heavens that hear
Young wings and feet of the new year
Move through their twilight, and shed round
Soft showers of sound,
Soothing the season with sweet rain,
If greeting come to make me fain,
What is it I can send again ?

2.

I know not if the year shall send
Tidings to usward as a friend,
And salutation, and such things
Bear on his wings
As the soul turns and thirsts unto
With hungering eyes and lips that sue
For that sweet food which makes all new.

3.

I know not if his light shall be
Darkness, or else light verily :
I know but that it will not part
Heart's faith from heart,
Truth from the trust in truth, nor hope
From sight of days unscaled that ope
Beyond one poor year's horoscope.

4.

That faith in love which love's self gives,
O master of my spirit, lives,
Having in presence unremoved
Thine head beloved,

The shadow of thee, the semitone
Of thy voice heard at heart and known,
The light of thee not set nor flown.

5.

Seas, lands, and hours, can these divide
Love from love's service, side from side,
Though no sound pass nor breath be heard
Of one good word ?
To send back words of trust to thee
Were to send wings to love, when he
With his own strong wings covers me.

6.

Who shall teach singing to the spheres,
Or motion to the flight of years ?
Let soul with soul keep hand in hand
And understand,
As in one same abiding-place
We keep one watch for one same face
To rise in some short sacred space.

7.

And all space midway is but nought
To keep true heart from faithful thought,
As under twilight stars we wait
By Time's shut gate
Till the slow soundless hinges turn,
And through the depth of years that yearn
The face of the Republic burn.

MATER DOLOROSA.

Citoyen, lui dit Enjolras, ma mère, c'est la République.—*Les Misérables*.

Who is this that sits by the way, by the
wild wayside,
In a rent stained raiment, the robe of a
cast-off bride,
In the dust, in the rainfall sitting, with
soiled feet bare,
With the night for a garment upon her,
with torn wet hair?
She is fairer of face than the daughters of
men, and her eyes,
Worn through with her tears, are deep as
the depth of skies.

This is she for whose sake being fallen, for
whose abject sake,
Earth groans in the blackness of darkness,
and men's hearts break
This is she for whose love, having seen her
the men that were
Poured life out as water, and shed their
souls upon air
This is she for whose glory their years were
counted as foam;
Whose face was a light upon Greece was
a fire upon Rome

Is it now not surely a vain thing, a foolish
and vain,
To sit down by her, mourn to her, serve
her, partake in the pain?
She is grey with the dust of time on his
manifold ways,
Where her faint feet stumble and falter
through yearlong days
Shall she help us at all, O fools, give fruit
or give fame,
Who herself is a name despised, a rejected
name?

We have not served her for guerdon. If
any do so,
That his mouth may be sweet with such
honey, we care not to know
We have drunk from a wine-unsweetened,
a perilous cup,
A draught very bitter. The kings of the
earth stood up,

And the rulers took counsel together to
smite her and slay;
And the blood of her wounds is given us
to drink to-day.

Can these bones live? or the leaves that
are dead leaves, bud?
Or the dead blood drawn from her veins be
in your veins blood?
Will ye gather up water again that was
drawn and shed?
In the blood is the life of the veins, and her
veins are dead
For the lives that are over are over, and
past things past;
She had her day, and it is not; was first,
and is last.

Is it nothing unto you then, all ye that pass
by
If her breath be left in her lips if she live
now or die?
Behold now, O people, and say if she be
not fair
Whom your fathers followed to find her
with praise and prayer,
And rejoiced having found her, though roof
they had none nor bread;
But ye care not; what is it to you if her own
day be dead?

It was well with our fathers; their sound
was in all men's heads;
There was fire in their hearts, and the
hunger of fight in their hands.
Naked and strong they went forth on her
strength like flame,
For her loves and her name's sake of old,
her republican name.
But their children by kings made quiet, by
priests made wise,
Love better the heat of their hearths than
the light of her eyes.

Are they children of these thy children in-
deed who have sold
O golden goddess the light of thy face for
gold?

Are they sons indeed the sons of thy day-
 spring of hope,
 Whose lives are in fief of an emperor, whose
 souls of a Pope?
 Hide then thine head, O beloved; thy time
 is done;
 Thy kingdom is broken in heaven, and
 blind thy sun.
 What sleep is upon you, to dream she indeed
 shall rise,
 When the hopes are dead in her heart as
 the tears in her eyes?
 If ye sing of her dead will she stir? if ye
 weep for her, weep?
 Come away now, leave her; what hath she
 to do but sleep?

But ye that mourn are alive, and have years
 to be;
 And life is good, and the world is wiser
 than we.
 Yea, wise is the world and mighty, with
 years to give,
 And years to promise; but how long now
 shall it live?
 And foolish and poor is faith, and her ways
 are bare,
 Till she find the way of the sun, and the
 morning air,
 In that hour shall this dead face shine as
 the face of the sun,
 And the soul of man and her soul and the
 world's be one.

MATER TRIUMPHALIS.

MOTHER of man's time-travelling genera-
 tions,
 Breath of his nostrils, heartblood of his
 heart,
 God above all Gods worshipped of all na-
 tions,
 Light above light, law beyond law thou
 art.

Thy face is as a sword smiting in sunder
 Shadows and chains and dreams and iron
 things;
 The sea is dumb before thy face, the thunder
 Silent, the skies are narrower than thy
 wings.

Angels and Gods, spirit and sense, thou
 takest
 In thy right hand as drops of dust or dew;
 The temples and the towers of time thou
 breakest,
 His thoughts and words and works, to
 make them new.

All we have wandered from thy ways, have
 hidden
 Eyes from thy glory and ears from calls
 they heard:
 Called of thy trumpets vainly, called and
 chidden,
 Scourged of thy speech and wounded of
 thy word

We have known thee and have not known
 thee; stood beside thee,
 Felt thy lips breathe, set foot where thy
 feet trod,
 Loved and renounced and worshipped and
 denied thee,
 As thou thou wert but as another God.
 "One hour for sleep," we said, "and yet
 one other;
 All day we served her, and who shall
 serve by night?
 Not knowing of thee, thy face not knowing,
 O mother,
 O light wherethrough the darkness is as
 light.

Men that forsook thee hast thou not for-
 saken,
 Races of men that knew not hast thou
 known;
 Nations that slept thou hast doubted not to
 waken
 Worshippers of strange Gods to make
 thine own.

All old grey histories hiding thy clear fea-
 tures,
 O secret spirit and sovereign, all men's
 tales,
 Creeds woven of men thy children and thy
 creatures,
 They have woven for vestures of thee and
 for veils.

Thine hands, without election or exemption,
Feed all men fainting from false peace or
strife,
O thou, the resurrection and redemption,
The godhead and the manhood and the
life.

The wings shadow the waters ; thine eyes
lighten
The horror of the hollows of the night ;
The depths of the earth and the dark places
brighten
Under thy feet, whiter than fire is white.

Death is subdued to thee, and hell's hands
broken ;
Where thou art only is heaven ; who
hears not thee,
Time shall not hear him ; when men's
names are spoken,
A nameless sign of death shall his name
be.

Deathless shall be the death, the name be
nameless ;
Sterile of stars his twilight time of death ;
With fire of hell shall shame consume him
shameless,
And dying, all the night darken his death.

The years are as thy garments, the world's
ages
As sandals bound and loosed from thy
swift feet ;
Time serves before thee, as one that hath
for wages
Praise or shame only, bitter words or
sweet.

Thou sayest " Well done," and all a cen-
tury kindles ;
Again thou sayest " Depart from sight
of me,"
And all the light of face of all men dwindles,
And the age is as the broken glass of
thee.

The night is as a seal set on men's faces,
On faces fallen of men that take no
light
Nor give light in the deeps of the dark
places,
Blind things incorporate with the body of
night.

Their souls are serpents winterbound and
frozen,
Their shame is as a tame beast, at their
feet
Couched ; their cold lips deride thee and
thy chosen,
Their lying lips made grey with dust for
meat.

Then when their time is full and days run
over,
The splendor of thy sudden brow made
bare
Darkens the morning ; thy bared hands
uncover
The veils of light and night and the awful
air.

And the world naked as a new-born maiden
Stands virginal and splendid as at birth,
With all thine heaven of all its light un-
laden,
Of all its love unburdened all thine earth.

For the utter earth and the utter air of
heaven
And the extreme depth is thine and the
extreme height ;
Shadows of things and veils of ages riven
Are as men's kings unkingdomed in thy
sight.

Through the iron years, the centuries
brazen gated,
By the ages barred impenetrable doors,
From the evening to the morning have we
waited,
Should thy foot haply sound on the awful
floors.

The floors untrodden of the sun's feet
glimmer,
The star-unstricken pavements of the
night ;
Do the lights burn inside ? the lights was
dimmer
On festal faces withering out of sight.

The crowned heads lose the light on them :
it may be
Dawn is at hand to smite the loud feast
dumb ;
To blind the torch-lit centuries till the day
be,
The feasting kingdoms till thy kingdom
come.

Shall it not come? deny they or dissemble,
Is it not even as lightning from on high
Now? and though many a soul close eyes
and tremble,

How should they tremble at all who love
thee as I?

I am thine harp between thine hands, O
mother!

All my strong chords are strained with
love of thee.

We grapple in love and wrestle, as each
with other

Wrestle the wind and the reluctant
sea.

I am no courtier of thee sober-suited,
Who loves a little for a little pay.

Me not thy winds and storms nor thrones
disrooted

Nor molten crowns nor thine own sins
dismay.

Sinned hast thou sometime, therefore art
thou sinless;

Stained hast thou been, who art there-
fore without stain;

Even as man's soul is kin to thee, but
kinless

Thou, in whose womb Time sows the
all-various grain.

I do not bid thee spare me, O dreadful
mother!

I pray thee that thou spare not, of thy
grace.

How were it with me then, if ever another
Should come to stand before thee in this
my place?

I am the trumpet at thy lips, thy clarion

Full of thy cry, sonorous with thy breath;
The grave of souls born worms and creeds
grown carrion

Thy blast of judgment fills with fires of
death.

Thou art the player whose organ-keys are
thunders,

And I beneath thy foot the pedal prest;

Thou art the ray whereat the rent night
sunders,

And I the cloudlet borne upon thy breast.

I shall burn up before thee, pass and perish,
As haze in sunrise on the red sea-line;

But thou from dawn to sunsett shalt
cherish

The thoughts that led and souls that
lighted mine.

Reared between night and noon and truth
and error,

Each twilight-travelling bird that trills
and screams

Sickens at midday, nor can face for terror
The imperious heaven's inevitable ex-
tremes.

I have no spirit of skill with equal fingers
At sign to sharpen or to slacken strings;

I keep no time of song with gold-perched
singers

And chirp of linnets on the wrists of
kings.

I am thy storm-thrush of the days that
darken,

Thy petrel in the foam that bears thy
bark

To port through night and tempest; if
thou hearken,

My voice is in thy heaven before the
lark.

My song is in the mist that hides thy
morning,

My cry is up before the day for thee;

I have heard thee and beheld thee and give
warning,

Before thy wheels divide the sky and sea.

Birds shall wake with thee voiced and
feathered fairer,

To see in summer what I see in spring;

I have eyes and heart to endure thee, O
thunder-bearer,

And they shall be who shall have tongues
to sing.

I have love at least, and have not fear, and
part not

From thine unnavigable and wingless
way;

Thou tarriest, and I have not said thou art
not,

Nor all thy night long have denied thy
day.

Darkness to daylight shall lift up thy psalm
Hill to hill thunder, vale cry back to vale!

With wind-notes as of eagles Æschylean,
And Sappho singing in the nightin-
gale.

Sung to by mighty sons of dawn and
daughters,
Of this night's songs thine ear shall keep
but one ;
That supreme song which shook the chan-
nelled waters,

And called thee skyward as God calls
the sun.

Come, though all heaven again be fire
above thee ;
Though death before thee come to clear
thy sky ;
Let us but see in his thy face who love thee :
Yea, though thou slay us, arise and let
us die.

A MARCHING SONG.

We mix from many lands,
We march for very far ;
In hearts and lips and hands
Our staffs and weapons are ;
The light we walk in darkens sun and
moon and star.

It doth not flame and wane
With years and spheres that roll,
Storm cannot shake nor stain
The strength that makes it whole,
The fire that moulds and moves it of the
sovereign soul.

We are they that have to cope
With time till time retire ;
We live on hopeless hope,
We feed on tears and fire ;
Time, foot by foot, gives back before our
sheer desire.

From the edge of harsh derision,
From discord and defeat,
From doubt and lame division,
We pluck the fruit and eat ;
And the mouth finds it bitter, and the
spirit sweet.

We strive with time at wrestling
Till time be on our side
And hope, our plumeless nestling,
A full-fledged eaglet ride
Down the loud length of storm its wind-
ward wings divide.

We are girt with our belief,
Clothed with our will and crowned ;
Hope, fear, delight, and grief,
Before our will give ground ;
Their calls are in our ears as shadows of
dead sound.

All but the heart forsakes us,
All fails us but the will ;
Keen treason tracks and takes us
In pits for blood to fill ;
Friend falls from friend, and faith for faith
lays wait to kill.

Out under moon and stars
And shafts of the urgent sun
Whose face on prison bars
And mountain-heads is one,
Our march is everlasting till time's march
be done.

Whither we know, and whence,
And dare not care where through.
Desires that urge the sense,
Fears changing old with new,
Pearls and pains beset the ways we press
into ;

Earth gives us thorns to tread,
And all her thorns are trod ;
Through lands burnt black and red
We pass with feet unshod ;
Whence we would be man shall not keep us,
nor man's God.

Through the great desert beasts
Howl at our backs by night,
And thunder-forging priests
Blow their dead bale-fires bright,
And on their broken anvils beat out bolts
for fight.

Inside their sacred smithies,
Though hot the hammer rings,
Their steel links snap like withies,
Their chains like twisted strings,
Their surest fetters are as plighted words
of kings.

O nations undivided,
 O single people and free,
 We dreamers, we derided,
 We mad blind men that see,
 We bear you witness ere ye come that ye
 shall be.

Ye sitting among tombs,
 Ye standing round the gate,
 Whom fire-mouthed war consumes,
 Or cold-lipped peace bids wait,
 All tombs and bars shall open, every grave
 and grate.

The locks shall burst in sunder,
 The hinges shrieking spin,
 When time, whose hand is thunder,
 Lays hand upon the pin,
 And shoots the bolts reluctant, bidding all
 men in.

These eyeless times and earless,
 Shall these not see and hear,
 And all their hearts burn fearless
 That were afrost for fear ?
 Is day not hard upon us, yea, not our day
 near ?

France ? from its grey dejection
 Make manifest the red
 Tempestuous resurrection
 Of thy most sacred head !
 Break thou the covering cerecloths ; rise up
 from the dead.

And thou, whom sea-walls sever
 From lands unvalled with seas,
 Wilt thou endure for ever,
 O Milton's England, these ?
 Thou that wast his Republic, wilt thou
 clasp their knees ?

These royalties rust-eaten,
 These worm-corroded lies,
 That keep thine head storm-beaten
 And sunlike strength of eyes
 From the open heaven and air of intercepted
 skies ;

These princelings with gauze winglets
 That buzz in the air unfurled,
 These summer-swarmling kinglets
 These thin worms crowned and
 curled,
 That bask and blink and warm themselves
 about the world ;

These fanged meridian vermin,
 Shrill gnats that crowd the dusk,
 Night-moths whose nestling ermine
 Smells foul of mould and musk,
 Blind flesh-flies hatched by dark and ham-
 pered in their husk ;

These honors without honor,
 These ghost-like gods of gold,
 This earth that wears upon her
 To keep her heart from cold
 No memory more of men that brought it
 fire of old ;

These limbs, supine, unbuckled,
 In rottenness of rest,
 These sleepy lips blood-suckled
 And satiate of thy breast,
 These dull wide mouths that drain thee dry
 and call thee blest ;

These masters of thee mindless
 That wear thee out of mind,
 These children of thee kindless
 That use thee out of kind,
 Whose hands strew gold before thee and
 contempt behind ;

Who have turned thy name to laughter,
 Thy sea-like sounded name
 That now none hearkens after
 For faith in its free fame,
 Who have robbed thee of thy trust and given
 thee of their shame ;

These hours that mock each other,
 These years that kill and die,
 Are these thy gains, our mother,
 For all thy gains thrown by ?
 Is this that end whose promise made thine
 heart so high ?

With empire and with treason
 The first right hand made fast,
 But in man's nobler season
 To put forth help the last,
 Love turns from thee, and memory disavows
 thy past.

Lest thine own sea disclaim thee,
 Lest thine own sons de-pise,
 Lest lips shoot out that name thee
 And seeing thee mer shut eyes,
 Take thought with all thy people, turn thine
 head and rise.

Turn thee, lift up thy face ;
 What ails thee to be dead ?

Ask of thyself for grace,
 Seek of thyself for bread,
 And who shall starve or shame thee, blind
 or bruise thine head ?

The same sun in thy sight,
 The same sea in thine ears,
 That saw thine hour at height,
 That sang thy song of years,
 Behold and hearken for thee, knowing thy
 hopes and fears.

O people, O perfect nation,
 O England that shall be,
 How long till thou take station ?
 How long till thralls live free ?
 How long till all thy soul be one with all
 thy sea ?

Ye that from south to north,
 Ye that from east to west,
 Stretch hands of longing forth
 And keep your eyes from rest,
 Lo, when ye will, we bring you gifts of
 what is best.

From the awful northland pines
 That skirt their wan dim seas
 To the ardent Apennines
 And sun-struck Pyrenees,
 One frost on all their frondage bites the
 blossoming trees.

The leaves look up for light,
 For heat of helpful air ;
 The trees of oldest height
 And thin storm-shaken hair
 Seek with gaunt hands up heavenward if the
 sun be there.

The woods where souls walk lenely,
 The forests girt with night,
 Desire the day-star only
 And firstlings of the light
 Not seen of slaves nor shining in their
 masters' sight.

We have the morning star,
 O foolish people, O kings !
 With us the day-springs are,
 Even all the fresh day-springs ;
 For us, and with us, all the multitudes of
 things.

O sorrowing hearts of slaves,
 We heard you beat from far !
 We bring the light that saves,
 We bring the morning star ;

Freedom's good things we bring you,
 whence all good things are.

With us the winds and fountains
 And lightnings live in tune ;
 The morning-colored mountains
 That burn into the noon,
 The mist's mild veil on valleys muffled from
 the moon :

The thunder-darkened highlands
 And lowlands hot with fruit,
 Sea-bays and shoals and islands,
 And cliffs that foil man's foot,
 And all the flower of large-limbed life and
 all the root :

The clangor of sea-eagles
 That teach the morning mirth
 With baying of heaven's beagles
 That seek their prey on earth,
 By sounding strait and channel, gulf and
 reach and firth.

With us the fields and rivers,
 The grass that summer thrills,
 The haze where morning quivers,
 The peace at heart of hills,
 The sense that kindles nature, and the
 soul that fills.

With us all natural sights,
 All notes of natural scale ;
 With us the starry lights ;
 With us the nightingale ;
 With us the heart and secret of the worldly
 tale.

The strife of things and beauty,
 The fire and light adored,
 Truth, and life-lightening duty,
 Love without crown or sword,
 That by his might and godhead makes man
 god and lord.

These have we, these are ours,
 That no priests give nor kings ;
 The honey of all these flowers,
 The heart of all these springs ;
 Ours, for where freedom lives not, there
 live no good things.

Rise, ere the dawn be risen ;
 Come, and be all souls fed ;
 From field and street and prison
 Come, for the feast is spread ;
 Live, for the truth is living ; wake, for
 night is dead.

SIENA.

INSIDE this northern summer's fold
 The fields are full of naked gold,
 Broadcast from heaven on lands it loves;
 The green veiled air is full of doves;
 Soft leaves that sift the sunbeams let
 Light on the small warm grasses wet
 Fall in short broken kisses sweet,
 And break again like waves that beat
 Round the sun's feet.

But I, for all this English mirth
 Of golden-shod and dancing days,
 And the old green-girt sweet-hearted earth
 Desire what here no spells can raise.
 Far hence, with holier heavens above,
 The lovely city of my love
 Bathes deep in the sun-satiate air
 That flows round no fair thing more fair
 Her beauty bare.

There the utter sky is holier, there
 More pure the intense white height of air,
 More clear men's eyes that mine would
 meet,
 And the sweet springs of things more sweet.
 There for this one warm note of doves
 A clamor of a thousand loves
 Storms the night's ear, the day's assails,
 From the tempestuous nightingales,
 And fills, and fails.

O gracious city well-beloved,
 Italian, and a maiden crowned,
 Siena, my feet are no more moved
 Toward thy strange-shapen mountain-
 bound:

But my heart in me turns and moves
 O lady loveliest of my loves,
 Toward thee, to lie before thy feet
 And gaze from thy fair fountain-seat
 Up the sheer street;

And the house midway hanging see
 That saw Saint Catherine bodily,
 Felt on its floors her sweet feet move,
 And the live light of fiery love
 Burn from her beautiful strange face,
 As in the sanguine sacred place
 Where in pure hands she took the head
 Severed, and with pure lips still red
 Kissed the lips dead.

For years through, sweetest of the saints,
 In quiet without cease she wrought,
 Till cries of men and fierce complaints
 From outward moved her maiden
 thought;
 And prayers she heard and sighs toward
 France,
 "God, send us back deliverance,
 Send back thy servant, lest we die!"
 With an exceeding bitter cry
 They smote the sky.

Then in her sacred saving hands
 She took the sorrows of the lands,
 With maiden palms she lifted up
 The sick time's blood-embittered cup,
 And in her virgin garment furled
 The faint limbs of a wounded world.
 Clothed with calm love and clear desire,
 She went forth in her soul's attire,
 A missive fire.

Across the might of men that strove
 It shone, and over heads of kings;
 And mo'ten in red flames of love
 Were swords and many monstrous things;
 And shields were lowered, and snapt were
 spears,
 And sweeter-tuned the clamorous years;
 And faith came back, and peace, that were
 Fled; for she bade, saying, "Thou, God's
 heir,
 Hast thou no care

"Lo, men lay waste thine heritage
 Still, and much heathen people rage
 Against thee, and devise vain things.
 What comfort in the face of kings,
 What counsel is there? Turn thine eyes
 And thine heart from them in like wise;
 Turn thee unto thine holy place
 To help us that of God for grace
 Require thy face.

For who shall hear us if not thou
 In a strange land? what doest thou there?
 Thy sheep are spoiled, and the ploughers
 plough
 Upon us; why hast thou no care
 For all this, and beyond strange hills
 Liest unregardful what snow chills

Thy foldless flock, or what rains beat ?
Lo, in thine ears, before thy feet,
Thy lost sheep bleat.

“ And strange men feed on faultless lives,
And there is blood, and men put knives,
Shepherd, unto the young lamb's throat ;
And one hath eaten, and one smote,
And one had hunger and is fed
Full of the flesh of these, and red
With blood of these as who drinks wine.
And God knoweth, who hath sent thee a
sign,
If these were thine.”

But the Pope's heart within him burned,
So that he rose up, seeing the sign,
And came among them; but she turned
Back to her daily way divine,
And fed her faith with silent things,
And lived her life with curbed white wings,
And mixed herself with heaven and died:
And now on the sheer city-side
Smiles like a bride.

You see her in the fresh clear gloom,
Where walls shut out the flame and bloom,
Of full-breathed summer, and the roof
Keeps the keen ardent air aloof
And sweet weight of the violent sky:
There bodily beheld on high,
She seems as one hearing in tune
Heaven within heaven, at heaven's full
noon,
In sacred swoon:

A solemn swoon of sense that aches
With imminent blind heat of heaven,
While all the wide-eyed spirit wakes,
Vigilant of the supreme Seven,
Whose choral flames in God's sight move,
Made unendurable with love,
That without wind or blast or breath
Compels all things through life and death
Whither God saith.

There on the dim side-chapel wall
Thy mighty touch memorial,
Razzi, raised up, for ages dead,
And fixed for us her heavenly head :
And, rent with plaited thorn and rod,
Bared the live likeness of her God
To men's eyes turning from strange lands,
Where, pale from thine immortal hands,
Christ wounded stands ;

And the blood blots his holy hair
And white brows over hungering eyes
That plead against us, and the fair
Mute lips forlorn of words or sighs
In the great torment that bends down
His bruised head with the bloomless crown,
White as the unfruitful thorn-flower,
A God beheld in dreams that were
Beheld of her.

In vain on all these sins and years
Falls the sad blood, fall the slow tears ;
In vain poured forth as watersprings,
Priests, on your altars, and ye, kings,
About your seats of sanguine gold ;
Still your God, spat upon and sold,
Bleeds at your hands ; but now is gone
All his flock from him saving one ;
Judas alone.

Surely your race it was that he.
O men signed backward with his name,
Beholding in Gethsemane
Bled the red bitter sweat of shame,
Knowing how the word of Christian should
Mean to men evil and not good,
Seem to men shameful for your sake,
Whose lips, for all the prayers they make,
Man's blood must slake.

But blood nor tears ye love not, you
That my love leads my longing to,
Fair as the world's old faith of flowers,
O golden goddesses of ours !
From what Italian rose-pleasance
Hath Aphrodite bidden glance
The lovelier lightnings of your feet ?
From what sweet Papias sward or seat
Led you more sweet ?

O white three sisters, three as one,
With flowerlike arms for flowery bands
Your linked limbs glitter like the sun,
And time lies beaten at your hands.
Time and wild years and wars and men
Pass, and ye care not whence or when ;
With calm lips over sweet for scorn,
Ye watch-night pass, O children born
Of the old world morn.

Ah, in this strange and shrineless place,
What doth a goddess, what a Grace,
Where no Greek worships her shrined limbs
With wreaths and Cytherean hymns ?
Where no lute makes luxurious
The adoring airs in Amathus,

Till the maid, knowing her mother near,
Sobs with love, aching with sweet fear?
What do ye here?

For the outer land is sad, and wears
A raiment of a flaming fire;
And the fierce fruitless moun'tain stairs
Climb, yet seem wroth and loth to aspire,
Climb, and break, and are broken down,
And through their clefts and crests the
town

Looks west and sees the dead sun lie,
In sanguine death that stains the sky
With angry dye.

And from the war-worn wastes without
In twilight, in the time of doubt,
One sound comes of one whisper where
Moved with low motions of slow air
The great trees nigh the castle swing
In the sad colored evening;
"Recorditi di me che son
La Pia"—that small sweet word alone
Is not yet gone.

"Recorditi di me"—the sound
Soul out of deep dumb days remote
Across the fiery and fatal ground

Comes tender as a hurt bird's note
To where a ghost with empty hands,
A woe-worn ghost, her palace stands
In the mid city, where the strong
Bells turn the sunset to song,
And the towers throng.

With other face, with speech the same,
A mightier maiden's likeness came
Late among mourning men that slept,
A sacred ghost that went and wept,
Whit: as the passion-wounded Lamb,
Saying, 'Ah, remember me, that am
Italia.' (From deep sea to sea
Earth heard, earth knew her, that this was
she.)

"Ricorditi."

Love made me of all things fairest thing,
And hate unmade me; this knows he
Who with God's sacerdotal ring
Enringed mine hand, espousing me
Yea, in thy myriad-mooded woe,
Yea, Mother, hast thou not said so?
Have not our hearts within us stirred.
O thou most holiest, at thy word?
Have we not heard?

As this dead tragic land that she
Found deadly, such was time to thee;
Years passed thee withering in the red
Maremma, years that deemed thee dead,
Ages that sorrowed or that scorned;
And all this while though all they mourned
Thou sawest the end of things unclean,
And the unborn that should see thee a
queen.

Have we not seen?

The weary poet, thy sad son,
Upon thy soil, under thy skies,
Saw all Italian things save one—
Italia; this thing missed his eyes;
The old mother might, the breast, the face,
That reared, that lit the Roman race;
This not Leopardia saw; but we,
What is it, Mother that we see,
What if not thee?

Look thou from Sienna southward home,
Where the priest's pall hangs rent on Rome,
And through the red rent swaddling bands
Toward thine she strains her laboring hands.
Look thou and listen, and let be
All the dead quick all the bond free;
In the blind eyes let there be sight;
In the eighteen centuries of the night
Let there be light.

Bow down the beauty of thine head,
Sweet, and with lips of living breath
Kiss thy sons sleeping, and thy dead,
That there be no more sleep or death.
Give us thy light, thy might, thy love,
Whom thy face seen afar above
Drew to thy feet; and when being free,
Thou hast blest thy children born to thee,
Bless also me.

Me that when others played or slept
Sat still under thy dress and wept.
Me who so early and unaware
Felt fall on bent bared brows and hair
(Thou drops of the overflowing blood!)

The bitter blessing of thy blood;
The sacred shadow of thy pain,
Thine, the true maiden-mother, slain
And raised again.

Me consecrated, if I might,
To praise thee, or to love at least,
O mother of all men's dear delight
Thou madest a choral-souled boy pries

Before my lips had leave to sing,
Or my hands hardly strength to cling
About the intolerable tree
Whereto they had nailed my heart and thee
And said, "Let be.

For to thee too the high Fates gave
Grace to be sacrificed and save,
That being arisen, in the equal sun,
God and the People should be one;
By those red roads thy footprints trod,
Man more divine, more human God,
Saviour; that where no light was known
But darkness, and a daytime down,
Light should be shown.

Let there be light, O Italy!

For our feet falter in the night,
O lamp of living years to be,

O light of God, let there be light!
Fill with a love keener than flame
Men sealed in spirit with thy name,
The cities and the Roman skies,

Where men with other than man's eyes
Saw thy sun rise.

For theirs thou wast and thine were they
Whose names outshine thy very day;
For they are thine and theirs thou art
Whose blood beats living in man's heart,
Remembering ages fled and dead
Wherein for thy sake these men bled;
They that saw Trebia, they that see
Mentana, they in years to be
That shall see thee.

For thine are all of us, and ours
Thou; till the seasons bring to birth
A perfect people, and all the powers
Be with them that bear fruit on earth;
Till the inner heart of man be one
With freedom, and the sovereign sun;
And Time, in likeness of a guide,
Lead the Republic as a bride
Up to God's side.

COR CORDIUM.

O HEART of hearts, the chalice of love's
fire,

Hid round with flowers and all the
bounty of bloom.

O wonderful and perfect heart for whom
The lyrist liberty made life a lyre;

O heavenly heart at whose most dear
desire

Dead love, living and singing, cleft his
tomb,

And with him risen and regent in death's
room

All day thy choral pulses rang full choir;
O heart whose beating blood was running
song,

O sole thing sweeter than thine own
songs were,

Help us for thy free love's sake to be
free.

True for thy truth's sake, for thy strength's
sake strong,

Till very liberty make clean and fair
The nursing earth as the sepulchral
sea.

IN SAN LORENZO.

Is thine hour come to wake, O slumbering
Night?

Hath not the Dawn a message in thine
ear?

Though thou be stone, and sleep, yet
shalt thou hear

When the word falls from heaven—Let
there be light,

Thou knowest we would not do thee despite
To wake thee while the old sorrow and
shame were near;

We spakè not loud for thy sake, and
for fear

Lest thou shouldst lose the rest that was
thy right,

The blessing given thee that was thine
alone,

The happiness to sleep and to be stone;
Nay, we kept silence of thee for thy sake

Albeit we knew thee alive, and left with
thee

The great good gift to feel not nor to see
But will not yet thine Angel bid thee
wake?

TIRESIAS.

PART I.

It is an hour before the hour of dawn.
Set in mine hand my staff and leave me
here
Outside the hollow house that blind men
fear,

More blind than I who live on life with-
drawn
And feel on eyes that see not but foresee
The shadow of death which clothes
Antigone.

Here lay her living body that here lies
Dead, if man living know what thing is
death,
If life be all made up of blood and
breath,
And no sense be save as of ears and eyes,
But heart there is not, tongue there is
not found,
To think or sing what verge hath life or
bound.

In the beginning when the powers that
made
The young child man a little loved him,
seeing
His joy of life and fair face of his being,
And bland and laughing with the man-
child played,
As friends they saw on our divine one
day
King Cadmus take to queen Harmonia.

The strength of soul that builds up as with
hands
Walls spiritual and towers and towns of
thought
Which only fate, not force, can bring to
nought,
Took then to wife the light of all men's
lands,
War's child and love's, most sweet and
wise and strong,
Order of things and rule and guiding
song.

It was long since : yea, even the sun that
saw
Remembers hardly what was, nor how
long,

And now the wise heart of the worldly
song
Is perished, and the holy hand of law
Can set no tune on time, nor help again
The power of thought to build up life for
men.

Yea, surely are they now transformed or
dead,
And sleep below this world, where no
sun warms,
Or move about it now in formless forms
Incognizable, and all their lordship fled ;
And where they stood up singing crawl
and hiss
With fangs that kill behind their lips that
kiss.

Yet though her marriage-garment, seeming
fair
Was dyed in sin and woven of jealousy
To turn their seed to poison, time shall
see
The gods reissue from them, and repair
Their broken stamp of godhead, and
again
Thought and wise love sing words of law
to men.

I, Tiresias the prophet, seeing in Thebes
Much evil, and the misery of men's
hands
Who sow with fruitless wheat the stones
and sands,
With fruitful thorns the fallows and warm
glebes,
Bade their hands hold lest worse hap
came to pass,
But which of you had heed of Tiresias ?

I am as Time's self in mine own wearied
mind,
Whom the strong heavy-footed years
have led
From night to night and dead men unto
dead,
And from the blind hope to the memory
blind ;
For each man's life is woven, as Time's
life is,
Of blind young hopes and old blind
memories.

I am a soul outside of death and birth.

I see before me and afterward I see.

O child, O corpse, the live dead face of thee,

Whose life and death are one thing upon earth

Where day kills night and night again kills day

And dies : but where is that Harmonia ?

O all-beholden light not seen of me,

Air, and warm winds that under the sun's eye

Stretch your strong wings at morning ; and thou, sky,

Whose hollow circle engirdling earth and sea

All night the set stars limit, and all day

The moving sun remeasures ; ye, I say,

Ye heights of hills, and thou Dircean spring

Inviolable, and ye towers that saw cast down

Seven kings keen-sighted toward your seven-faced town

And quenched the red seed of one sightless king ;

And thou, for death less dreadful than for birth,

Whose wild leaves hide the horror of the earth,

O mountain whereon gods made chase of kings,

Cithæron, thou that sawest on Pentheus dead

Fangs of a mother fasten and wax red

And satiate with a son thy swollen springs, And heardest her cry fright all thine eyries' nests

Who gave death suck at sanguine-suckling breasts ;

Yea, and a grief more grievous, without name,

A curse too grievous for the name of grief,

Thou sawest, and heardest the rumor scare relief

Even unto death and madness, when the flame

Was lit whose ashes dropped about the pyre

That of two brethren made one sundering fire ;

O bitter nurse, that on thine hard bare knees Rear'dst for his fate the bloody-footed child

Whose hands should be more bloodily defiled

And the old blind feet walk wearier ways than these,

Whose seed, brought forth in darkness unto doom,

Should break as fire out of his mother's womb ;

I bear you witness as ye bear to me,

Time, day, night, sun, stars, life, death, air, sea, earth,

And ye that round the human house of birth

Watch with veiled heads and weaponed hands, and see

Good things and evil, strengthless yet and dumb,

Sit in the clouds with cloudlike hours to come ;

Ye forces without form and viewless powers That have the keys of all are years in hold,

That prophecy too late with tongues of gold,

In a strange speech whose words are perished hours,

I witness to you what good things ye give As ye to me what evil while I live.

What should I do to blame you, what to praise,

For floral hours and hours funeral ?

What should I do to curse or bless at all

For winter-woven or summer-colored days ?

Curse he that will and bless whoso can,

I have no common part in you with man.

I hear a springing water, whose quick sound Makes softer the soft sunless patient air,

And the wind's hand is laid on my thin hair

Light as a lover's, and the grasses round

Have odors in them of green bloom and rain

Sweet as the kiss wherewith sleep kisses pain.

I hear the low sound of the spring of time,
Still beating as the low live throb of blood
And where its waters gathered head and
flood

I hear change moving on them, and the
chime
Across them of reverberate wings of
hours
Sounding, and feel the future air of
flowers.

The wind of change is soft as snow, and
sweet

The sense thereof as roses in the sun,
The faint wind springing with the spring
that run,

The dim sweet smell of flowering hopes, and
heat

Of unbeholden sunrise ; yet how long
I know not, till the morning put forth
song.

I prophesy of life, who live with death ;
Of joy, being sad; of sunlight, who am
blind;

Of man, whose ways are alien from man-
kind

And his lips are not parted with man's
breath;

I am a word out of the speechless years,
The tongue of time, that no man sleeps
who hears.

I stand a shadow across the door of doom,
Athwart the lintel of death's house, and
wait;

Nor quick nor dead, nor flexible by fate,
Nor quite of earth nor wholly of the tomb;
A voice, a vision, light as fire or air,
Driven between days that shall be and
that were.

I prophesy, with feet upon a grave,
Of death cast out and life devouring death
As flame doth wood and stubble with a
breath;

Of freedom, though all manhood were one
slave;
Of truth, though all the world were liar;
of love,
That time nor hate can raze the witness of.

Life that was given for love's sake and his
law's

∴ Their powers have no more power on;
they divide

Spoils wrung from lust or wrath of man
or pride,

And keen oblivion without pity or pause
Sets them on fire and scatters them on
air

Like ashes shaken from a suppliant's hair.

But life they lay no hand on ; life once
given

No force of theirs hath competence to
take;

Life that was given for some divine
thing's sake,

To mix the bitterness of earth with heaven,
Light with man's night, and music with
his breath,

Dies not, but makes its living food of
death.

I have seen this, who live where men are
not,

In the high starless air of fruitful night
On that serenest and obscurest height

Where dead and unborn things are one in
thought

And whence the live unconquerable
springs

Feed full of force the torrents of new
things.

I have seen this, who saw long since, being
man,

As now I know not, if indeed I be,
The fair bare body of Wisdom good to
see

And evil whence my light and night began;
Light on the goal and darkness on the
way,

Light all through night and darkness
all through day.

Mother, that by that Pegasean spring
Didst fold round in thine arms thy
blinded son,

Weeping "O holiest, what thing hast
thou done,

What, to my child ? woe's me that see the
thing !

Is this thy love to me-ward, and hereof
Must I take sample how the gods can
love ?

"O child, thou hast seen indeed, poor
 child of mine,
 The breasts and flanks of Pallas bare in
 sight,
 But never shalt see more the dear sun's
 light,
 O Helicon, how great a pay is thine
 For some poor antelopes and wild-deer
 dead,
 My child's eyes hast thou taken in their
 stead—"

Mother, thou knowest not what he had to
 give,
 Thy goddess though then angered, for
 mine eyes;
 Fame and foreknowledge, and to be most
 most wise,
 And centuries of high-thoughted life to
 live,
 And in mine hand this guiding staff to be
 As eyesight to the feet of men that see.

Perchance I shall not die at all, nor pass
 The general door and lintel of men dead,
 Yet even the very tongue of wisdom said
 What grace should come with death to
 Tiersias,
 What special honor that God's hand
 accord
 Who gathers all men's nations as their
 lord.

And sometimes when the secret eye of
 thought
 Is changed with obscuration, and the
 sense
 Aches with long pain of hollow pres-
 cience,
 And fiery foresight with foresuffering bought
 Seems even to infect my spirit and con-
 sume,
 Hunger and thirst come on me for the
 tomb.

I could be fain to drink my death and
 sleep,
 And no more wrapt about with bitter
 dreams
 Talk with the stars and with the winds
 and streams
 And with the inevitable years, and weep;
 For how should he who communes with
 the years
 Be sometime not a living spring of tears?

O child, that guided of thine only will
 Didst set thy maiden foot against the
 gate
 To strike it open ere thine hour of fate,
 Antigone, men say not thou dist ill,
 For love's sake and the reverence of his
 awe
 Divinely dying, slain by mortal law;

For love is awful as immortal death,
 And through thee surely hast thy brother
 won
 Rest, out of sight of our world-weary sun,
 And in the dead land where ye ghosts draw
 breath,
 A royal place and honor; so wast thou
 Happy, though earth have hold of thee
 too now.

So hast thou life and name inviolable
 And joy it may be, sacred and severe,
 Joy secret-souled beyond all hope or fear,
 A monumental joy wherein to dwell
 Seclude and silent, a selected state,
 Serene possession of thy proper fate.

Thou art not dead as these are dead who
 live
 Full of blind years, a sorrow-shaken
 kind,
 Nor as these are am I the prophet blind;
 They have not life that have nor heart to
 give
 Life, nor have eyesight who lack heart
 to see
 When to be not is better than to be

O ye whom time but bears with for a span,
 How long will ye be blind and dead, how
 long
 Make your own souls part of your own
 soul's wrong?
 Son of the word of the most high gods,
 man,
 Why wilt thou make thine hour of light
 and breath
 Emptier of all but shame than very
 death?

Fool, wilt thou live for ever? though thou
 care
 With all thine heart for life to keep it
 fast,
 Shall not thine hand forego it at the last?
 Lo, thy sure hour shall take thee by the
 hair

Sleeping, or when thou knowest not, or
wouldst fly ;
And as men died much mightier shalt
thou die.

Yea, they are dead, men much more worth
than thou ;

The savour of heroic lives that were,
Is it not mixed into thy common air ?

The sense of them is shed about thee now :
Feel not thy brows a wind blowing from
far ?

Aches not thy forehead with a future
star ?

The light that thou may'st make out of thy
name

Is in the wind of this same hour that
drives,
Blown within reach but once of all men's
lives ;

And he that puts forth hand upon the flame
Shall have it for a garland on his head
To sign him for a king among the dead.

But these men that the lessening years be-
hold,

Who sit the most part without flame or
crown,

And brawl and sleep and wear their life-
days down

With joys and griefs ignobler than of old
And care not if the better day shall be,—
Are these or art thou dead, Antigone ?

PART II.

As when one wakes out of a waning dream
And sees with instant eyes the naked
thought

Whereof the vision as a web was wrought,
I saw beneath a heaven of cloud and gleam,
Ere yet the heart of the young sun waxed
brave,

One like a prophet standing by a grave.

In the hoar heaven was hardly beam or
breath,

And all the colored hills and fields were
grey,

And the wind wandered seeking for the
day,

And wailed as though he had found her
done to death

And this grey hour had built to bury her
The hollow twilight for a sepulchre.

But in my soul I saw as in a glass
A pale and living body full of grace
There lying, and over it the prophet's
face

Fixed ; and the face was not of Tiresias,
For such a starry fire was in his eyes
As though their light it was that made
the skies.

Such eyes should God's have been when
very love

Looked forth of them and set the sun
afame,

And such his lips that called the light by
name

And bade the morning forth at sound
thereof ;

His face was sad and masterful as fate,
And like a star's his look compassionate.

Like a star's gazed on of sad eyes so long
It seems to yearn with pity, and all its
fire

As a man's heart to tremble with desire
And heave as though the light would bring
forth song

Yet from his face flashed lightning on
the land,

And like the thunder-bearer's was his
hand.

The steepness of strange stairs had tried his
feet,

And his lips yet seemed sick of that salt
bread

Wherewith the lips of banishment are
fed ;

But nothing was there in the world so
sweet

As the most bitter love, like God's own
grace,

Wherewith he gazed on that fair buried
face.

Grief and glad pride and passion and sharp
shame,

Wrath and remembrance, faith and hope
and hate

And pitiless pity of days degenerate,
Where in his eyes as an incorporate flame

That burned about her, and the heart
thereof

And central flower was very fire of love.

But all about her grave wherein she slept
 Were noises of the wild wind-footed
 years
 Whose footprints flying were full of blood
 and tears,
 Shrieks as of Mænads on their hills that
 leapt
 And yelled as beasts of ravin, and their
 meat
 Was the rent flesh of their own sons to
 eat :

And fiery shadows passing with strange
 cries ;
 And Sphinx-like shapes about the ruined
 lands,
 And the red reck of parricidal hands
 And intermixture of incestuous eyes,
 And light as of that self-divided flame
 Which made an end of the Cadmean
 name.

And I beheld again, and lo the grave,
 And the bright body laid therein as dead,
 And the same shadow across another
 head
 That bowed down silent on that sleeping
 slave
 Who was the lady of empire from her
 birth
 And light of all the kingdoms of the
 earth.

Within the compass of the watcher's hand
 All strengths of other men and divers
 powers
 Were held at ease and gathered up as
 flowers ;
 His heart was as the heart of his whole
 land,
 And at his feet as natural servants lay
 Twilight and dawn and night and labor-
 ing day.

He was most awful of the sons of God.
 Even now men seeing seemed at his lips
 to see
 The trumpet of the judgment that should
 be,
 And in his right hand terror for a rod,
 And in the breath that made the moun-
 tains bow
 The horned fire of Moses on his brow.

The strong wind of the coming of the
 Lord
 Had blown as flame upon him, and
 brought down
 On his bare head from heaven fire for a
 crown,
 And fire was girt upon him as a sword
 To smite and lighten, and on what ways
 he trod
 There fell from him the shadow of a God.

Pale, with the whole world's judgment in
 his eyes,
 He stood and saw the grief and shame
 endure
 That he, though highest of angels, might
 not cure,
 And the same sins done under the same
 skies,
 And the same slaves to the same tyrants
 thrown,
 And fain he would have slept, and fain
 been stone.

But with unslumbering eyes he watched the
 sleep
 That sealed her sense whose eyes were
 suns of old ;
 And the night shut and opened, and
 behold,
 The same grave where those prophets came
 to weep,
 But she that lay therein had moved and
 stirred,
 And where those twain had watched her
 stood a third.

The tripled rhyme that closed in Paradise
 With Love's name sealing up its starry
 speech—
 The tripled might of hand that found in
 reach
 All crowns beheld far off of all men's eyes,
 Song, color, carven wonders of live
 stone—
 These were not, but the very soul alone.

The living spirit, the good gift of grace,
 The faith which takes of its own blood
 to give
 That the dead veins of buried hope may
 live,
 Came on her sleeping, face to naked face,

<p>And from a soul more sweet than all the south Breathed love upon her sealed and breathless mouth.</p> <p>Between her lips the breath was blown as fire, And through her flushed veins leapt the liquid life And with sore passion and ambiguous strife</p> <p>The new birth rent her and the new desire The will to live, the competence to be, The sense to hearken and the soul to see.</p> <p>And the third prophet standing by her grave Stretched forth his hand and touched her, and her eyes, Opened as sudden suns in heaven might rise, And her soul caught from his the faith to save ; Faith above creeds faith beyond records, born</p>	<p>Of the pure, naked, fruitful, awful morn. For in he daybreak now that night was dead The light, the shadow, the delight, the pain, The purpose and the passion of those twain, Seemed gathered on that third prophetic head, And all their crowns were as one crown, and one His face with her face in the living sun.</p> <p>For even with that communion of their eyes His whole soul passed into her and made her strong ; And all the sounds and shows of shame and wrong, The hands that slays, the lip that mocks and lies, Temples and thrones that yet men seem to see,— Are these dead or art thou dead, Italy ?</p>
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THE SONG OF THE STANDARD.

<p>MAIDEN most beautiful, mother most boun- tiful, lady of lands, Queen and republican, crowned of the centuries whose years are thy sands, See for thy sake what we bring to thee, Italy, here in our hands.</p> <p>This is the banner thy gonfalon, fair in the front of thy fight, Red from the hearts that were pierced for thee, white as thy mountains are white, Green as the spring of thy soul everlasting, whose life-blood is light.</p> <p>Take to thy bosom thy banner, a fair bird fit for the nest, Feathered for flight into sunrise or sunset, for eastward or west, Fledged for the flight everlasting, but held yet warm to thy breast.</p> <p>Gather it close to thee, song-bird or storm- bearer, eagle or dove, Lift it to sunward, a beacon beneath to the beacon above, Green as our hope in it, white as our faith in it, red as our love.</p>	<p>Thunder and splendor of lightning are hid in the folds of it furled ; Who shall unroll it but thou, as thy bolt to be handled and hurled, Out of whose lips is the honey, whose bosom the milk of the world ?</p> <p>Out of thine hands hast thou fed us with pasture of color and song ; Glory and beauty by birthright to thee as thy garments belong ; Out of thine hands thou shalt give us as surely deliverance from wrong.</p> <p>Out of thine eyes thou hast shed on us love as a lamp in our night, Wisdom a lodestar to ships, and remem- brance a flame-colored light ; Out of thine eyes thou shalt shew us as surely the sundawn of right.</p> <p>Turn to us, speak to us, Italy, mother, but once and a word, None shall not follow thee, none shall not serve thee, not one that has heard ; Twice hast thou spoken a message, and time is athirst for the third.</p>
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Kingdom and empire of peoples thou hadst,
and thy lordship made one
North sea and south sea and east men and
west men that look on the sun ;
Spirit was in thee and counsel, when soul
in the nations was none.

Banner and beacon thou wast to the cen-
turies of stormwind and foam,
Ages that clashed in the dark with each
other, and years without home ;
Empress and prophetess wast thou, and
what wilt thou now be, O Rome ?

Ah, by the faith and the hope and the love
that have need of thee now,
Shines not thy face with the forethought of
freedom, and burns not thy brow ?
Who is against her but all men ? and who
is beside her but thou ?

Art thou not better than all men ? and
where shall she turn but to thee ?
Lo, not a breath, not a beam, not a beacon
from midland to sea ;
Freedom cries out for a sign among nations,
and none will be free.

England in doubt of her, France in despair
of her, all without heart—
Stand on her side in the vanward of ages,
and strike on her part !
Strike but one stroke for the love of her
love of thee, sweet that thou art !

Take in thy right hand thy banner, a strong
staff fit for thine hand ;
Forth at the light of it lifted shall foul things
flock from the land ;
Faster than stars from the sun shall they
fly, being lighter than sand.

Green thing to green in the summer makes
answer, and rose-tree to rose ;
Lily by lily the year becomes perfect ; and
none of us knows
What thing is fairest of all things on earth
as it brightens and blows.

This thing is fairest in all time of all things,
in all time is best—
Freedom, that made thee, our mother, and
suckled hers sons at thy breast ;
Take to thy bosom the nations, and there
shall the world come to rest.

ON THE DOWNS.

A FAINT sea without wind or sun ;
A sky like flameless vapor dun ;
A valley like an unsealed grave
That no man cares to weep upon,
Bare, without boon to crave,
Or flower to save.

And on the lip's edge of the down,
Here where the bent-grass burns to brown
In the dry sea-wind, and the heath
Crawls to the cliff-side and looks down,
I watch, and hear beneath
The low tide breathe.

Along the long lines of the cliff,
Down the flat sea-line without skiff
Or sail or black-blown fume for mark,
Through wind-wor: heads of heath and stiff
Stems blossomless and stark
With dry sprays dark,

I send mine eyes out as for news
Of comfort that all these refuse,
Tidings of light or living air
From windward where the low clouds muse
And the sea blind and bare
Seems full of care.

So is it now as it was then,
And as men have been such are men,
There as I stood I seem to stand,
Here sitting chambered, and again
Feel spread on either hand
Sky, sea, and land.

As a queen taken and stripped and bound
Sat earth, discolored and disowned ;
As a king's palace empty and dead
The sky was without light or sound ;
And on the summer's head
Were ashes shed,

Scarce wind enough was on the sea,
 Scarce hope enough there moved in me,
 To sow with live blank flowers of white
 The green plain's sad serenity,
 Or with stray thoughts of light
 Touch my soul's sight.

By footless ways and sterile went
 My thought unsatisfied, and bent
 With blank unspeculative eyes
 On the untracked sands of discontent
 Where, watched of helpless skies,
 Life hopeless lies.

East and west went my soul to find
 Light, and the world was bare and blind
 And the soil herbless where she trod
 And saw men laughing scourge mankind,
 Unsmitten by the rod
 Of any God.

Out of time's blind old eyes were shed
 Tears that were mortal, and left dead
 The heart and spirit of the years,
 And on man's fallen and helmless head
 Time's disheartening tears
 Fell cold as fears.

Hope flowering had but strength to bear
 The fruitless fruitage of despair ;
 Grief trod the grapes of joy for wine,
 Whereof love drinking unaware
 Died as one undivine

And made no sign.
 And soul and body dwelt apart ;
 And weary wisdom without heart
 Stared on the dead round heaven and
 sighed,
 "Is death too hollow as thou art,
 Or as man's living pride "
 And saying so died.

And my soul heard the songs and groans
 That are about and under thrones,
 And felt through all time's murmur thrill
 Fate's old imperious semitones
 That made of good and ill
 One same tune still.

Then "Where is God ? and where is aid ?
 Or what good end of these ?" she said ;
 "Is there no God or end at all,

Nor reason with unreason weighed
 Nor force to disenchant
 Weak feet that fall ?

"No light to lighten and no rod
 To chasten men ? Is there no God ?"
 So girt with anguish, iron-zoned,
 Went my soul weeping as she trod
 Between the men enthroned
 And men that groaned.

O fool, that for brute cries of wrong
 Heard not the grey glad mother's song
 Ring response from the hills and waves,
 But heard harsh noises all day long
 Of spuits that were slaves
 And dwelt in graves.

The wise word of the secret earth
 Who knows what life and death are worth,
 And how no help and no control
 Can speed or stay things come to birth
 Nor all world's wheels's that roll
 Crush one born soul.

With all her tongues of life and death,
 With all her bloom and blood and breath,
 From all years dead and all things done,
 In the ear of man the mother saith,
 "There is no God, O son,
 If thou be none."

So my soul sick with watching heard
 That day the wonder of that word,
 And as one springs out of a dream
 Sprang, and the stagnant wells were stirred
 Whence flows through gloom and gleam
 Thought's soundless stream.

Out of pale cliff and sunburnt heath,
 Out of the low sea curled beneath
 In the land's bending arm embayed,
 Out of all lives that thought hears breathe
 Life within life inlaid,
 Was answer made.

A multitudinous monotone
 Of dust and flower and seed and stone,
 In the deep sea-rock's mid-sea sloth,
 In the live waters trembling zone,
 In all men love and loathe,
 One God at growth.

One forceful nature uncreate
 That feeds itself with death and fate,

Evil and good, and change and time,
That within all men lies at wait
Till the hour shall bid them climb
And live sublime.

For all things come by fate to flower
At their unconquerable hour,
And time brings truth, and truth makes
free,
And freedom fills time's veins with power,
As, brooding on that sea,
My thought filled me.

And the sun smote the clouds and slew
And from the sun the sea's breath blew,
And white waves laughed and turned and
fled

The long green heaving sea-field through,
And on them overhead
The sky burnt red.

Like a furled flag that wind sets free,
On the swift summer-colored sea
Shook out the red lines of the light,
The live sun's standard, blown to lee
Across the live sea's white
And green delight.

And with divine triumphant awe
My spirit moved within me saw,
With burning passion of stretched eyes,
Clear as the light's own firstborn law,
In windless wastes of skies
Time's deep dawn rise.

MESSIDOR.

PUT in the sickles and reap ;
For the morning of harvest is red,
And the long large ranks of the corn
Colored and clothed as the morn
Stand thick in the fields and deep
For them that faint to be fed.
Let all that hunger and weep
Come hither, and who would have bread
Put in the sickles and reap.

Colored and clothed as the morn,
The grain grows ruddier than gold,
And the good strong sun is alight
In the mists of the day-dawn white,
And the crescent, a faint sharp horn,
In the fear of his face turns cold
As the snakes of the night-time that creep
From the flag of our faith unrolled.
Put in the sickles and reap.

In the mists of the day-dawn white
That roll round the morning star,
The large flame lightens and grows
Till the red gold harvest-rows,
Full-grown, are full of the light
As the spirits of strong men are,
Crying, Who shall slumber or sleep ?
Who put back morning or mar ?
Put in the sickles and reap.

Till the red-gold harvest-rows
For miles through shudder and shine
In the wind's breath, fed with the sun,
A thousaad spear-heads as one

Bowed as for battle to close
Line in rank against line
With place and station to keep
Till all men's hands at a sign
Put in the sickles and reap.

A thousand spear heads as one
Wave as with swing of the sea
When the mid tide sways at its height
For the hour is for harvest or fight
In face of the just calm sun,
As the signal in season may be
And the lot in the helm may leap
When chance shall shake it ; but ye,
Put in the sickles and reap.

For the hour is for harvest or fight
To clothe with raiment of red ;
O men sore stricken of hours,
Lo, this one, is not it ours
To glean, to gather, to smite ?
Let none make risk of his head
Within reach of the clean scythe-sweep,
When the people that lay as the dead
Put in the sickles and reap.

Lo, this one, is not it ours,
Now the ruins of dead things rattle
As dead men's bones in the pit,
Now the kings wax lean as they sit
Girt round with memories of powers,
With musters counted as cattle
And armies folded as sheep
Till the red blind husbandman battle
Put in the sickles and reap.

Now the kings wax lean as they sit,
 The people grow strong to stand ;
 The men they trod on and spat,
 The dumb dread people that sat
 As corpses cast in a pit,
 Rise up with God at their hand,
 And thrones are hurled on a heap,
 And strong men, sons of the land,
 Put in the sickles and reap.

The dumb dread people that sat
 All night without screen for the night,
 All day without food for the day,
 They shall not give their harvest away,
 They shall eat of its fruit and wax fat :
 They shall see the desire of their sight,
 Though the ways of the seasons be steep,
 They shall climb with face to the light,
 Put in the sickles and reap.

ODE ON THE INSURRECTION IN CANDIA.

STR. 1.

I LAID my laurel-leaf
 At the white feet of grief,
 Seeing how with covered face and plume-
 less wings,
 With unverted head
 Veiled, as who mourns his dead,
 Lay Freedom couched between the
 thrones of kings,
 A wearied lion without lair,
 And bleeding from base wounds, and vexed
 with alien air.

STR. 2.

Who was it, who, put poison to thy mouth,
 Who lulled with craft or chant thy vigi-
 lant eyes,
 O light of all men, lamp to north and
 south,
 Eastward and westward, under all men's
 skies ?
 For if thou sleep, we perish, and thy name
 Dies with the dying of our ephemeral
 breath ;
 And if the dust of death o'ergrows thy
 flame,
 Heaven also is darkened with the dust of
 death.
 If thou be mortal, if thou change or cease,
 If thine hand fail, or thine eyes turn from
 Greece,
 Thy first-born, and the first-fruits of thy
 fame,
 God is no God, and man is moulded out
 of shame.

STR. 3.

Is there change in the secret skies,
 In the sacred places that see
 The divine beginning of things,
 The web of the web of the world ?

Is Freedom a worm that dies,
 And God no God of the free ?
 Is heaven like as earth with her kings
 And time as a serpent curled
 Round life as a tree ?

From the steel-bound snows of the north
 From the mystic mother, the east,
 From the sands of the fiery south,
 From the low-lit clouds of the west,
 A sound of a cry is gone forth ;
 Arise, stand up from the feast,
 Let wine be far from the mouth,
 Let no man sleep or take rest,
 Till the plague hath ceased.

Let none rejoice or make mirth
 Till the evil thing be stayed,
 Nor grief be lulled in the lute,
 Nor hope be loud on the lyre ;
 Let none be glad upon the earth.
 O music of young man and maid,
 O songs of the bride, be mute.
 For the light of her eyes, her desire,
 Is the soul dismayed.

It is not a land new-born
 That is scourged of a stranger's hand,
 That is rent and consumed with flame.
 We have known it of old, this face,
 With the cheeks and the tresses torn,
 With shame on the brow as a brand.
 We have named it of old by name,
 The land of the royallest race,
 The most holy land.

STR. 4.

Had I words of fire,
 Whose words are weak as snow
 Were my heart a lyre
 Whence all its love might flow

In the mighty modulations of desire,
In the notes wherewith man's passion
worships woe ;

Could my song release
The thought weak words confine,
And my grief, O Greece,
Prove how it worships thine ;
It would move with pulse of war the limbs
of peace
Till she flushed and trembled and became
divine.

(Once she held for true
This truth of sacred strain ;
Though blood drip like dew
And life run down like rain,
It is better that war spare but one or two
Than that many live, and liberty be slain.)

Then with fierce increase
And bitter mother's mirth,
From the womb of peace,
A womb that yearns for birth,
As a man-child should deliverance come to
Greece,
As a saviour should the child be born on
earth.

STR. 5.

O that these my days had been
Ere white peace and shame were wed
Without torch or dancers' din
Round the unsacred marriage bed !
For of old the sweet-tongued law,
Freedom, clothed with all men's love,
Girt about with all men's awe,
With the wild war-eagle mated
The white breast of peace the dove,
And his ravenous heart abated
And his windy wings were furled
In an eyrie consecrated
Where the snakes of strife uncurled,
And her soul was soothed and sated
With the welfare of the world.

ANT. 1.

But now, close-clad with peace,
While war lays hand on Greece,
The kingdoms and their kings stand by to
see ;
"Aha, we are strong," they say,
"We are sure, we are well," even they ;
"And if we serve, what ails ye to be free ?
We are warm, clothed round with peace
and shame ;
But ye lie dead and naked, dying for a
name."

ANT. 2.

O kings and queens and nations miserable
O fools and blind, and full of sins and
fears,
With these it is, with you it is not well ;
Ye have one hour, but these the im-
mortal years.
These for a pang, a breath, a pulse o' pain,
Have honor, while that honor on earth
shall be ;
Ye for a little sleep and sloth shall gain
Scorn, while one man of all men born is
free.
Even as the depth more deep than night or
day,
The sovereign heaven that keeps its eldest
way,
So without chance or change, so without
stain,
The heaven of their high memories shall
not wax nor wane.

ANT. 3.

As the soul on the lips of the dead
Stands poised her wings for flight,
A bird scarce quit of her prison,
But fair without form or flesh,
So stands over each man's head
A splendor of imminent light,
A glory of fame rearsen,
Of day rearsen afresh
From the hells of night.

In the hundred cities of Crete
Such glory was not of old,
Though her name was great upon earth
And her face was fair on the sea.
The words of her lips were sweet,
Her days were woven with gold,
Her fruits came timely to birth ;
So fair she was, being free,
Who is bought and sold.

So fair, who is fairer now
With her children dead at her side,
Unseparated, unconsecrated,
Unapparelled, unhelped, unpitied,
With blood for gold on her brow,
Where the towery tresses divide ;
The goodly, the golden-gated,
Many-crowned, many-named, many
cited,
Made like as a bride.

And these are the bridegroom's gifts ;
 Anguish that straitens the breath.
 Shame, and the weeping of mothers,
 And the suckling dead at the breast,
 White breast that a long sob lifts ;
 And the dumb dead mouth, which saith,
 "How long, and how long, my
 brothers?"
 And wrath which endures not rest,
 And the pains of death.

ANT. 4.

Ah, but would that men,
 With eyelids purged by tears,
 Saw, and heard again
 With consecrated ears,
 All the clamor, all the splendor, all the
 slain,
 All the lights and sounds of war, the fates
 and fears ;

Saw far off aspire,
 With crash of mine and gate,
 From a single pyre
 The myriad flames of fate,
 Soul by soul transfigured in funereal fire.
 Hate made weak by love, and love made
 strong by hate ;

Children without speech,
 And many a nursing breast ;
 Old men in the breach,
 Where death sat down a guest ;
 With triumphant lamentation made for
 each,
 Let the world salute their ruin and their
 rest.

In one iron hour
 The crescent flared and waned,
 As from tower to tower,
 Fire-scathed and sanguine-stained,
 Death with flame in hand, an open blood-
 red flower,
 Passed, and where it bloomed no bloom
 of life remained.

ANT. 5.

Hear thou, earth, the heavy-hearted
 Weary nurse of waning races
 From the dust of years departed,
 From obscure funereal places,
 Raise again thy sacred head ;
 Lift the light up of thine eyes ;

Where are they of all thy dead
 That did more than these men dying
 In their godlike Grecian wise ?
 Not with garments rent and sighing,
 Neither gifts of myrrh and gold,
 Shall their sons lament them lying,
 Lest the fame of them wax cold ;
 But with lives to lives replying,
 And a worship from of old.

EPODE.

O sombre heart of earth and swoln with
 grief,
 That in thytime wast as a bird for mirth,
 Dim womb of life and many a seed and
 sheaf,
 And full of changes, ancient heart of
 earth,
 From grain and flower, from grass and
 every leaf, [birth,
 Thy mysteries and thy multitudes of
 From hollow and hill, from vales and all
 thy springs,
 From all shapes born and breath of all
 lips made.
 From thunders, and the sound of winds
 and wings,
 From light, and from the solemn sleep
 of shade,
 From the full fountains of all living things,
 Speak, that this plague be stayed.
 Bear witness all the ways of death and life
 If thou be with us in the world's old
 If thou be mother indeed, [strife,
 And from these wounds that bleed
 Gather in thy great breast the dewes that
 fall,
 And on thy sacred knees
 Lull with mute melodies,
 Mother, thy sleeping sons in death's dim
 hall.
 For these thy sons, behold,
 Sons of thy sons of old,
 Bear witness if these be not as they were ;
 If that high name of Greece
 Depart, dissolve, de cease
 From mouths of men and memories like
 as air.
 By the last milk that drips
 Dead on the child's dead lips,
 By old men's white unviolated hair,
 By sweet unburied faces
 That fill those red high places
 Where death and freedom found one lion's
 lair,

<p>By all the bloodred tears That fill the chaliced years, The vessels of the sacrament of time, Wherewith, O thou most holy, O Freedom, sure and slowly Thy ministrant white hands cleanse earth of crime ; Though we stand off afar Where slaves and slaveries are, Among the chains and crowns of poisonous peace ; Though not the beams that shone From rent Arcadion Can melt her mists and bid her snows de- crease ;]</p>	<p>Do thou with sudden wings Darken the face of kings, But turn again the beauty of thy brows on Greece ; Thy white and woundless brows, Whereto her great heart bows ; Give her the glories of thine eyes to see ; Turn thee, O holiest head, Toward all thy quick and dead, For love's sake of the souls that cry for thee ; O love, O light, O flame, By thine own Grecian name, We call thee and we charge thee that all these be free.</p>
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Jan. 1867.

"NON DOLET."

<p>It does not hurt. She looked along the knife Smiling, and watched the thick drops mix and run Down the sheer blade ; not that which had been done Could hurt the sweet sense of the Roman wife, But that which was to do yet ere the strife Could end for each for ever, and the sun : Nor was the palm yet nor was peace yet won While pain had power upon her husband's life.</p>	<p>It does not hurt, Italia. Thou art more Than bride to bridegroom ; how shalt thou not take The gift love's blood has reddened for thy sake ? Was not thy lifeblood given for us be- fore ? And if love's heartblood can avail thy need, And thou not die, how should it hurt indeed ?</p>
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EURYDICE.

TO VICTOR HUGO

<p>ORPHEUS, the night is full of tears and cries, And hardly for the storm and ruin shed Can even thine eyes be certain of her head Who never passed out of thy spirit's eyes, But stood and shone before them in such wise As when with love her lips and hands were fed, And with mute mouth out of the dusty dead Strove to make answer when thou bad'st her rise.</p>	<p>Yet viper-stricken must her lifeblood feel The fang that stung her sleeping, the foul germ Even when she wakes of hell's most poisonous worm, Though now it writhe beneath her wound- ed heel, Turn yet, she will not fade nor fly from thee ; Wait, and see hell yield up Eurydice.</p>
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AN APPEAL.

I.

ART thou indeed among these,
Thou of the tyrannous crew,
The kingdoms fed upon blood,
O queen from of old of the seas,
England, art thou of them too
That drink of the poisonous flood,
That hide under poisonous trees?

II.

Nay, thy name from of old,
Mother, was pure, or we dreamed;
Purer we held thee than this,
Purer fain would we hold;
So goodly a glory it seemed,
A fame so bounteous of bliss,
So more precious than gold.

III.

A praise so sweet in our ears,
That thou in the tempest of things
As a rock for a refuge shouldst stand,
In the bloodred river of tears
Poured forth for the triumph of kings;
A safeguard, a sheltering land,
In the thunder and torrent of years.

IV.

Strangers came gladly to thee,
Exiles, chosen of men,
Safe for thy sake in thy shade.
Sat down at thy feet and were free.
So men spake of thee then;
Now shall their speaking be stayed?
Ah, so let it not be!

V.

Not for revenge or affright,
Pride, or a tyrannous lust,
Cast from thee the crown of thy praise,
Mercy was thine in thy might;
Strong when thou wert, thou wert just;
Now, in the wrong-doing days,
Cleave thou, thou at least, to the right.

VI.

How should one charge thee, how sway,
Save by the memories that were?
Not thy gold nor the strength of thy ships,
Nor the might of thine armies at bay,
Made thee, mother, most fair;
But a word from republican lips
Said in thy name in thy day.

VII.

Hast thou said it, and hast thou forgot?
Is thy praise in thine ears as a scoff?
Blood of men guiltless was shed,
Children, and souls without spot,
Shed, but in places far off;
Let slaughter no more be, said
Milton; and slaughter was not.

VIII.

Was it not said of thee too,
Now, but now, by thy foes,
By the slaves that had slain their *France*;
And thee would slay as they slew—
"Down with her walls that enclose
Freemen that eye us askance,
Fugitives, men that are true!"

IX.

This was thy praise or thy blame
From bondsman or freeman—to be
Pure from pollution of slaves,
Clean of their sins, and thy name
Bloodless, innocent, free;
Now if thou be not, thy waves
Wash not from off thee thy shame.

X.

Freeman he is not, but slave,
Whoso in fear for the State
Cries for surety of blood,
Held of gibbet and grave;
Neither is any land great
Whom, in her fear-stricken mood,
These things only can save.

XI.

Lo, how fair from afar,
Taintless of tyranny, stands
The mighty daughter, for years
Who trod the winepress of war ;
Shines with immaculate hands ;
Slays not a foe, neither fears ;
Stains not peace with a scar.

XII.

Be not as tyrant or slave,
England ; be not as these,
Thou that wert other than they.
Stretch out thine hand, but to save ;
Put forth thy strength, and release ;
Lest there arise, if thou slay,
Thy shame as a ghost from the grave.

November 20, 1867.

PERINDE AC CADAVER.

In a vision Liberty stood

By the childless charm-stricken bed
Where, barren of glory and good,
Knowing nought if she would not or would,
England slept with her dead.

Her face that the foam had whitened,
Her hands that were strong to strive,
Her eyes whence battle had lightened,
Over all was a drawn shroud tightened
To bind her asleep and alive.

She turned and laughed in her dream
With grey lips arid and cold ;
She saw not the face as a beam
Burn on her, but only a gleam
Through her sleep as of new-stamped
gold.

But the goddess, with terrible tears
In the light of her down-drawn eyes,
Spake fire in the dull scaled ears ;
"Thou, sick with slumbers and fears,
Wilt thou sleep now indeed or arise ?

"With dreams and with words and with
light
Memories and empty desires
Thou hast wrapped thyself round all night ;
Thou hast shut up thine heart from the
right,
And warmed thee at burnt-out fires.

"Yet once if I smote at thy gate,
Thy sons would sleep not, but heard ;
O thou that wast found so great,
Art thou smitten with folly or fate
That thy sons have forgotten my word ?

"O Cromwell's mother, O breast
That suckled Milton ! thy name
That was beautiful then, that was blest,
Is it wholly discrowned and deprest,
Trodden under by sloth into shame ?

"Why wilt thou hate me and die ?
For none can hate me and live.
What ill have I done to thee ? why
Wilt thou turn from me fighting, and fly,
Who would follow thy feet and forgive ?

"Thou hast seen me stricken, and said,
What is it to me ? I am strong ;
Thou hast seen me bowed down on my
dead
And laughed and lifted thine head,
And washed thine hands of my wrong.

"Thou hast put out the soul of thy sight ;
Thou hast sought to my foemen as friend,
To my traitors that kiss me and smite,
To the kingdoms and empires of night
That begin with the darkness, and end.

"Turn thee, awaken, arise,
With the light that is risen on the lands,
With the change of the fresh-colored skies ;
Set thine eyes on mine eyes,
Lay thy hands in my hands."

She moved and mourned as she heard.
Sighed and shifted her place,
As the wells of her slumber were stirred
By the music and wind of the word,
Then turned and covered her face.

"Ah," she said in her sleep,
 "Is my work not done with and done?
 Is there corn for my sickle to reap?"

And strange is the pathway and steep,
 And sharp overhead is the sun.

"I have done thee service enough,
 Loved thee enough in my day;
 Now nor hatred nor love
 Nor hardly remembrance thereof
 Lives in me to lighten my way.

"And is it not well with us here?
 Is change as good as is rest?
 What hope should move me, or fear,
 That eye should open or ear,
 Who have long since won what is best?"

"Where among us are such things
 As turn men's hearts into hell?
 Have we not queens without stings,
 Scotched princes, and fangless kings?
 Yea," she said, "we are well.

"We have filed the teeth of the snake
 Monarchy, how should it bite?"

Should the slippery slow thing wake,
 It will not sting for my sake;
 Yea," she said, "I do right."

So spake she, drunken with dreams,
 Mad; but again in her ears
 A voice as of storm-swelled streams
 Spake; "No brave shame then redeems
 Thy lusts of sloth and thy fears?"

"Thy poor lie slain of thine hands,
 Their starved limbs rot in thy sight;

As a shadow the ghost of thee stands
 Among men living and lands,
 And stirs not leftward or right.

"Freeman he is not, but slave,
 Who stands not out on my side;
 His own hand hollows his grave,
 Nor strength is in me to save
 Where strength is none to abide.

"Time shall tread on his name
 That was written for honor of old,
 Who hath taken in change for fame
 Dust, and silver, and shame,
 Ashes, and iron, and gold."

MONOTONES.

BECAUSE there is but one truth;
 Because there is but one banner;
 Because there is but one light;
 Because we have with us our youth
 Once, and one chance and one manner
 Of service, and then the night;

Because we have found not yet
 Any way for the world to follow
 Save only that ancient way;
 Whosoever forsake or forget,
 Whose faith soever be hollow,
 Whose hope soever grow grey;

Because of the watchwords of kings
 That are many and strange and unwritten,
 Diverse, and our watchword is one;
 Therefore, though seven be the strings,
 One string, if the harp be smitten,
 Sole sounds, till the tune be done;

Sounds without cadence or change
 In a weary monotonous burden,
 Be the keynote of mourning or mirth;

Free, but free not to range;
 Taking for crown and for guerdon
 No man's praise upon earth;

Saying one sole word evermore,
 In the ears of the charmed word saying,
 Charmed by spells to its death;
 One that chanted of yore
 To a tune of the sword-sweep's playing
 In the lips of the dead blew breath;

Therefore I set not mine hand
 To the shifting of changed modulations
 To the smiting of manifold strings;
 While the thrones of the throned men stand
 One song for the morning of nations,
 One for the twilight of kings.

One chord, one word, and one way,
 One hope as our law, one heaven,
 Till slain be the great one wrong;
 Till the people it could not slay,
 Risen up, have for one star seven,
 For a single, a sevenfold song.

THE OBLATION.

Ask nothing more of me sweet,
 All I can give you I give
 Heart of my heart, were it more.
 More would be laid at your feet :
 Love that should help you to live,
 Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give
 Once to have sense of you more,
 Touch you and taste of you sweet,.

Think you and breathe you and live,
 Swept of your wings as they soar,
 Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more
 Give you but love of you, sweet :
 He that hath more, let him give ;
 He that hath wings, let him soar ;
 Mine is the heart at your feet
 Here, that must love you to live.

A YEAR'S BURDEN.

FIRE and wild light of hope and doubt and
 fear,
 Wind of swift change, and clouds and hours
 that veer
 As the storm shifts of the tempestuous year ;
 Cry wellaway, but well befall the right.

Hope sits yet hiding her war-wearied eyes,
 Doubt sets her forehead earthward and
 denies,
 But fear brought hand to hand with danger
 dies,
 Dies and is burnt up in the fire of fight.

Hearts bruised with loss and eaten through
 with shame
 Turn at the time's touch to devouring
 flame ;
 Grief stands as one that knows not her own
 name,
 Nor if the star she sees bring day or night.

No song breaks with it on the violent air,
 But shrieks of shame, defeat, and brute des-
 pair ;
 Yet something at the star's heart far up
 there
 Burns as a beacon in our shipwrecked
 sight.

O strange fierce light of presage, unknown
 star,
 Whose tongues shall tell us what thy secrets
 are,
 What message trembles in thee from so far?
 Cry wellaway, but well befall the right.

From shores laid waste across an iron sea
 Where the waifs drift of hopes that were to
 be,
 Across the red rolled foam we look for thee,
 Across the fire we look up for the light.

From days laid waste across disastrous
 years,
 From hopes cut down across a world of
 fears,
 We gaze with eyes too passionate for tears,
 Where faith abides though hope be put to
 flight.

Old hope is dead, the grey-haired hope
 grown blind
 That talked with us of old things out of
 mind,
 Dreams, deeds and men the world has left
 behind ;
 Yet, though hope die, faith lives in hope's
 despite.

Ay, with hearts fixed on death and hope-
 less hands
 We stand about our banner while it stands
 Above but one field of the ruined lands ;
 Cry wellaway, but well befall the right.

Though France were given for prey to bird
 and beast,
 Though Rome were rent in twain of king
 and priest,
 The soul of man, the soul is safe at least
 That gives death life and dead men
 hands to smite.

Are ye so strong, O kings, O strong
men? Nay,
Waste all ye will and gather all ye may,
Yet one thing is there that ye shall not
slay,
Even thought, that fire nor iron can
affright.

The woundless and invisible thought that
goes
Free throughout time as north or south
wind blows,
Far throughout space as east or west sea
flows,
And all dark things before it are made
bright.

Thy thought, thy word, O soul republican,
O spirit of life, O God whose name is
man :

What sea of sorrows but thy sight shall
span?
Cry wellaway, but well befall the right.

With all its coils crushed, all its rings un-
curled,
The one most poisonous worm that soiled
the world
Is wrenched from off the throat of man,
and hurled
Into deep hell from empire's helpless
height.

Time takes no more infection of it now ;
Like a dead snake divided of the plough,
The rotten thing lies cut in twain ; but
thou,
Thy fires shall heal us of the serpent's
bite.

Ay, with red cautery and a burning brand
Purge thou the leprous leaven of the
land ;

Take to thee fire, and iron in thine hand,
Till blood and tears have washed the
soiled limbs white.

We have sinned against thee in dreams
and wicked sleep ;
Smite, we will shrink not ; strike, we will
not weep :
Let the heart feel thee ; let thy wound go
deep ;
Cry wellaway, but well befall the right.

Wound us with love, pierce us with long-
ing, make
Our souls thy sacrifices ; turn and take
Our hearts for our sin-offerings lest they
break,
And mould them with thine hands and
give them might.

Then, when the cup of ills is drained in-
deed,
Will we come to thee with our wounds
that bleed,
With famished mouths and hearts that
thou shalt feed,
And see thee worshipped as the world's
delight.

There shall be no more wars nor king-
doms won,
But in thy sight whose eyes are as the sun
All names shall be one name, all nations
one,
All souls of men in man's one soul unite.

O sea whereon men labor, O great sea
That heaven seems one with, shall these
things not be ?

O earth, our earth, shall time not make us
free ?
Cry wellaway, but well befall the right.

EPILOGUE.

BETWEEN the wave-ridge and the strand
 I let you forth in sight of land,
 Songs that with storm-crossed wings and
 eyes
 Strain eastward till the darkness die ;
 Let signs and beacons fall or stand,
 And stars and balefires set and rise ;
 Ye, till some lordlier lyric hand
 Weave the beloved brows their crown,
 At the beloved feet lie down.

And whatsoever of life or light
 Love hath to give you, what of might
 Or heart or hope is yours to live,
 I charge you take in trust to give
 For very love's sake, in whose sight,
 Through poise of hours alternative
 And seasons plumed with light or night,
 Ye live and move and have your breath,
 To sing with on the ridge of death.

I charge you faint not all night through
 For love's sake that t was breathed on you
 To be to you as wings and feet
 For travel, and as blood to heat
 And sense of spirit to renew
 And bloom of fragrance to keep sweet
 And fire of purpose to keep true
 The life, if life in such things be,
 That I would give you forth of me.

Out where the breath of war may bear,
 Out in the rank moist reddened air
 That sounds and smells of death, and
 hath
 No light but death's upon its path
 Seen through the black wind's tangled hair,
 I send you past the wild time's wrath
 To find his face who bade you bear
 Fruit of his seed to faith and love,
 That he may take the heart thereof.

By day or night, by sea or street,
 Fly till ye find and clasp his feet
 And kiss as worshippers who bring
 Too much love on their lips to sing,
 But with hushed heads accept and greet
 The presence of some heavenlier thing
 In the near air ; so may ye meet
 His eyes, and droop not utterly
 For shame's sake at the light you see.

Not utterly struck spiritless
 For shame's sake and unworthiness
 Of these poor forceless hands that come
 Empty, these lips that should be dumb,
 This love whose seal can but impress
 These weak word-offerings wearisome
 Whose blessings have not strength to bless
 Nor lightnings fire to burn up aught
 Nor smite with thunders of their thought.

One thought they have, even love ; one
 light,
 Truth, that keeps clear the sun by night ;
 One chord, of faith as of a lyre ;
 One heat, of hope as of a fire ;
 One heart, one music, and one might,
 One flame, one altar, and one choir ;
 And one man's living head in sight
 Who said, when all time's sea was foam,
 "Let there be Rome,"—and there was
 Rome.

As a star set in space for token
 Like a live word of God's mouth spoken,
 Visible sound, light audible,
 In the great darkness thick as hell
 A stanchless flame of love unloken,
 A sign to conquer and compel,
 A law to stand in heaven unbroken
 Whereby the sun shines, and where-
 through
 Time's eldest empires are made new

So rose up on our generations
 That light of the most ancient nations,
 Law, life, and light, on the world's way,
 The very God of very day,
 The sun-god ; from their star-like stations
 Far down the night in disarray
 Flew, crowned with fires of tribulations,
 The suns of sunless years, whose light
 And life and law were of the night.

The naked kingdom quenched and stark
 Drave with their dead things down the dark
 Helmless ; their whole world, throne by
 throne,
 Fell, and its whole heart turned to stone.
 Hopeless ; their hands that touched our ark
 Withered ; and lo, aloft, alone,
 On time's white waters man's one bark,
 Where the red sundawn's open eye
 Lit the soft gulf of low green sky.

So for a season piloted
 It sailed the sunlight, and struck red
 With fire of dawn reverberate
 The wan face of incumbent fate
 That paused half pitying overhead
 And almost had foregone the freight
 Of those dark hours the next day bred
 For shame, and almost had forsworn
 Service of night for love of morn.

Then broke the whole night in one blow,
 Thundering ; then all hell with one throe
 Heaved, and brought forth beneath the
 stroke

Death ; and all dead things moved and
 woke

That the dawn's arrows had brought low,
 At the great sound of night that broke
 Thundering, and all the old world-wide
 woe ;

And under night's loud-sounding dome
 Men sought her, and she was not Rome.

Still with blind hands and robes blood-wet
 Night hangs on heaven, reluctant yet,
 With black blood dripping from her eyes
 On the soiled lintels of the skies,
 With brows and lips that thirst and threat,
 Heart-sick with fear lest the sun rise,
 And aching with her fires that set,
 And shuddering ere dawn bursts her bars,
 Burns out with all her beaten stars.

In this black wind of war they fly
 Now, ere that hour be in the sky
 That brings back hope, and memory back,
 And light and law to lands that lack ;
 That spiritual sweet hour whereby
 The bloody-handed night and black
 Shall be cast out of heaven to die ;
 Kingdom by kingdom, crown by crown,
 The fires of darkness are blown down.

Yet heavy, grievous yet the weight
 Sits on us of imperfect fate.
 From wounds of other days and deed-
 Still this day's breathing body bleeds :
 Still kings for fear and slaves for hate
 Sow lives of men on earth like seeds
 In the red soil they saturate ;
 And we, with faces eastward set,
 Stand sightless of the morning yet.

And many for pure sorrow's sake
 Look back and stretch back hands to take

Gifts of night's giving, ease and sleep,
 Flowers of night's grafting, strong to
 steep

The soul in dreams it will not break,
 Songs of soft hours that sigh and sweep
 Its lifted eyelids nigh to wake
 With subtle plumes and lulling breath
 That soothe its weariness to death.

And many, called of hope and pride,
 Fall ere the sunrise from our side.

Fresh lights and rumors of fresh flames
 That shift and veer by night like flames,
 Shouts and blown trumpets, ghosts that
 glide

Calling, and hail them by dead names,
 Fears, angers, memories, dreams divide
 Spirit from spirit, and wear out
 Strong hearts of men with hope and
 doubt.

Till time beget and sorrow bear
 The soul-sick eyeless child despair,
 That comes among us, mad and blind,
 With counsels of a broken mind,
 Tales of times dead and woes that were,
 And, prophesying against mankind,
 Shakes out the horror of her hair
 To take the sunlight with its coils
 And hold the living soul in toils.

By many ways of death and moods
 Souls pass into their servitudes.

Their young wings weaken, plume by
 plume

Drops, and their eyelids gather gloom
 And close against man's frauds and feuds,
 And their tongues call they know not
 whom

To help in their vicissitudes ;
 For many slaveries are, but one
 Liberty, single as the sun.

One light, one law, that burns up strife,
 And one sufficiency of life.

Self-established, the sufficing soul
 Hears the loud wheels of changes roll,
 Sees against man man bare the knife,
 Sees the world severed, and is whole ;
 Sees force take dowerless fraud to wife,
 And fear from fraud's incestuous bed
 Crawl forth and smite his father dead :

Sees death made drunk with war, sees time
 Weave many-colored crime with crime,
 State overthrown on ruining state,
 And dares not be disconsolate.

Only the soul hath feet to climb,
Only the soul hath room to wait
Hath brows and eyes to hold sublime
Above all evil and all good,
All strength and all decrepitude.

She only, she since earth began,
The many-minded soul of man,
From one incognisable root
That bears such divers-colored fruit,
Hath ruled for blessing or for ban
The flight of seasons and pursuit ;
She regent, she republican,
With wide and equal eyes and wings
Broods on things born and dying things.

Even now for love or doubt of us
The hour intense and hazardous
Hangs high with pinions vibrating
Whereto the light and darkness cling
Dividing the dim season thus,
And shakes from one ambiguous wing
Shadow, and one is luminous
And day falls from it ; so the past
Torments the future to the last.

And we that cannot hear or see
The sounds and lights of liberty,
The witness of the naked God
That treads on burning hours unshod
With instant feet unwounded ; we
That can trace only where he trod
By fire in heaven or storm at sea,
Not know the very present whole
And naked nature of the soul ;

We that see wars and woes and kings,
And portents of enormous things,
Empires, and agonies, and slaves,
And whole flame of town-swallowing
graves ;
That hear the harsh hours clap sharp wings
Above the roar of ranks like waves,
From wreck to wreck as the world swings ;
Know but that men there are who see
And hear things other far than we,

By the light sitting on their brows,
The fire wherewith their presence glows,
The music falling with their feet,
The sweet sense of a spirit sweet
That with their speech or motion grows
And breathes and burns men's hearts
with heat ;

By these signs there is none but knows
Men who have life and grace to give,
Men who have seen the soul and live.

By the strength sleeping in their eyes,
The lips wheron their sorrow lies
Smiling, the lines of tears unshed,
The large divine look of one dead
That speaks out of the breathless skies
In silence, when the light is shed
Upon man's soul of memories ;
The supreme look that sets love free,
The look of stars and of the sea ;

By the strong patient godhead seen
Implicit in their mortal mien,
The conscience of a God held still
And thunders ruled by their own will
And fast-bound fires that might burn clean
This worldly air that foul things fill,
And the afterglow of what has been,
That, passing, shows us without word
What they have seen, what they have
heard ;

By all these keen and burning signs
The spirit knows them and divines.
In bonds, in banishment, in grief,
Scoffed at and scourged with unbelief,
Foiled with false trusts and thwart designs,
Stripped of green days and hopes in leaf,
Their mere bare body of glory shines
Higher, and man gazing surelier sees
What light, what comfort is of these.

So I now gazing ; till the sense
Being set on fire of confidence
Strains itself sunward, feels out far
Beyond the bright and morning star,
Beyond the extreme wave's refluxence,
To where the fierce first sunbeams are
Whose fire intolerant and intense
As birthpangs whence day burns to be
Parts breathless heaven from breathing sea.

I see not, know not, and am blest,
Master, who know that thou knowest,
Dear lord and leader, at whose hand
The first days and the last days stand,
With scars and crowns on head and breast,
That fought for love of the sweet land
Or shall fight in her latter quest ;
All the days armed and girt and crowned
Whose glories ring thy glory round.

Thou sawest, when all the world was blind,
The light that should be of mankind,
The very day that was to be ;
And how shalt thou not sometime see

Thy city perfect to thy mind
 Stand face to living face with thee,
 And no miscrowned man's head behind ;
 The hearth of man, the human home,
 The central flame that shall be Rome ?

As one that ere a June day rise
 Makes seaward for the dawn and tries
 The water with delighted limbs
 That taste the sweet dark sea and swims
 Right eastward under strengthening skies,
 And sees the gradual rippling rims
 Of waves whence day breaks blossom-wise
 Take fire ere light peer well above,
 And laughs from all his heart with love ;

And softer swimming with raised head
 Feels the full flower of morning shed
 And fluent sunrise round him rolled
 That laps and laves his body bold
 With fluctuant heaven in water's stead,
 And urgent through the growing gold
 Strikes, and sees all the spray flash red,
 And his soul takes the sun, and yearns
 For joy wherewith the sea's heart burns ;

So the soul seeking through the dark
 Heavenward, a dove without an ark,

Transcends the unnavigable sea
 Of years that wear out memory ;
 So calls a sunward-singing lark,
 In the car of souls that should be free ;
 So points them toward the sun for mark
 Who steer not for the stress of waves,
 And seek strange helmsmen, and are
 slaves.

For if the swimmer's eastward eye
 Must see no sunrise—must put by
 The hope that lifted him and led
 Once, to have light about his head,
 To see beneath the clear low sky
 The green foam-whitened wave wax red
 And all the morning's banner fly—
 Then, as earth's helpless hopes go down,
 Let earth's self in the dark tides drown.

Yea, if no morning must behold
 Man, other than were they now cold,
 And other deeds than past deeds done,
 Nor any near or far-off sun
 Salute him risen and sunlike-souled,
 Free, boundless, fearless, perfect, one,
 Let man's world die like worlds of old,
 And here in heaven's sight only be
 The sole sun of a worldless sea.

POEMS AND BALLADS.

SECOND SERIES.

THE LAST ORACLE.

(A. D. 361.)

εἶπατε τῷ βασιλεῖ, χαμαὶ πῖσε δαίδαλος αὐτὰ·
οὐκετι Φοῖβος ἔχει καλύβαν, οὐ μάντιδα δάφνην,
οὐ παγὰν λαλέουσιν· ἀπέσβετο καὶ λάλον ὕδωρ.

YEARS have risen and fallen in darkness or
in twilight,

Ages waxed and waned that knew not thee
nor thine,

While the world sought light by night and
sought not thy light,

Since the sad last pilgrim left thy dark mid
shrine.

Dark the shrine and dumb the fount of song
thence welling,

Save for words more sad than tears of
blood, that said:

*Tell the king, on earth has fallen the glorious
dwelling,*

*And the watersprings that spake are quenched
and dead.*

Not a cell is left the God, no roof, no cover;

*In his hand the prophet laurel flowers no
more.*

And the great king's high sad heart, thy true
last lover,

Felt thine answer pierce and cleave it to
the core.

And he bowed down his hopeless head

In the drift of the wild world's tide,

And dying, *Thou hast conquered*, he said,
Galilean; he said it, and died.

And the world that was thine and was
ours

When the Graces took hands with the
Hours

Grew cold as a winter wave

In the wind from a wide-mouthed grave,

As a gulf wide open to swallow

The light that the world held dear.

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,

Destroyer and healer, hear!

Age on age thy mouth was mute, thy face
was hidden,

And the lips and eyes that loved thee blind
and dumb;

Song forsook their tongues that held thy
name forbidden,

Light their eyes that saw the strange God's
kingdom come.

Fire for light and hell for heaven and psalms
for pæans

Filled the clearest eyes and lips most sweet
of song,

When for chant of Greeks the wail of Gali-
leans

Made the whole world moan with hymns of
wrath and wrong.

Yea, not yet we see thee, father, as they saw
thee,

They that worshipped when the world was
theirs and thine,

They whose words had power by thine own
power to draw thee

Down from heaven till earth seemed more
than heaven divine.

For the shades are about us that hover

When darkness is half withdrawn

And the skirts of the dead night cover

The face of the live new dawn.

For the past is not utterly past

Though the word on its lips be the last,

And the time be gone by with its creed

When men were as beasts that bleed,

As sheep or as swine that wallow,

In the shambles of faith and of fear.

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,

Destroyer and healer, hear!

Yet it may be, lord and father, could we know
it,

We that love thee for our darkness shall
have light

More than ever prophet hailed of old or poet
Standing crowned and robed and sovereign

in thy sight.

To the likeness of one God their dreams en-
thrall'd thee,

Who wast greater than all Gods that waned
and grew;

Son of God the shining son of Time they
called thee,

Who wast older, O our father, than they
knew.

For no thought of man made Gods to love or
honor

Ere the song within the silent soul began,
Nor might earth in dream or deed take heaven
upon her

Till the word was clothed with speech by
lips of man.

And the word and the life wast thou,
The spirit of man and the breath;
And before thee the Gods that bow
Take life as thine hands and death.
For these are as ghosts that wane,
That are gone in an age or twain;
Harsh, merciful, passionate, pure,
They perish, but thou shalt endure;
Be their life as the swan's or the swallow,
They pass as the flight of a year.

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,
Destroyer and healer, hear!

Thou the word, the light, the life, the breath,
the glory.

Strong to help and heal, to lighten and to
slay,

Thine is all the song of man, the world's
whole story;

Not of morning and of evening is thy day.

Old and younger Gods are buried or begotten
From uprising to downsetting of thy sun,
Risen from eastward, fallen to westward and
forgotten,

And their springs are many, but their end
is one.

Divers births of godheads find one death ap-
pointed,

As the soul whence each was born makes
room for each;

God by God goes out, disrowned and dis-
appointed,

But the soul stands fast that gave them
shape and speech.

Is the sun yet cast out of heaven?

Is the song yet cast out of man?

Life that had song for its leaven

To quicken the blood that ran
Through the veins of the songless years

More bitter and cold than tears,

Heaven that had thee for its one

Light, life, word, witness, O sun,

Are they soundless and sightless and
hollow,

Without eye, without speech, without
ear?

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,
Destroyer and healer, hear!

Time arose and smote thee silent at his warn-
ing,

Change and darkness fell on men that fell
from thee;

Dark thou satest, veiled with light, behind
the morning,

Till the soul of man should lift up eyes
and see.

Till the blind mute soul get speech again and
eyesight,

Man may worship not the light of life within;
In his sight the stars whose fires grow dark in
thy sight

Shine as sunbeams on the night of death
and sin.

Time again is risen with mightier word of
warning,

Change hath blown again a blast of louder
breath;

Clothed with clouds and stars and dreams that
melt in morning,

Lo, the Gods that ruled by grace of sin and
death!

They are conquered, they break, they
are stricken,

Whose might made the whole world
pale;

They are dust that shall rise not or
quicken

Though the world for their death's sake
wait.

As a hound on a wild beast's trace,

So time as their godhead in chase;

As wolves when the hunt makes head,

They are scattered, they fly, they are fled;

They are fled beyond hail, beyond holla,

And the cry of the chase, and the cheer.

O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,

Destroyer and healer, hear!

Day by day thy shadow shines in heaven be-
holden,

Even the sun, the shining shadow of thy
face:

King, the ways of heaven before thy feet grow
golden;

God, the soul of earth is kindled with thy
grace.

In thy lips the speech of man whence Gods
were fashioned,

In thy soul the thought that makes them
and unmakes;

By thy light and heat incarnate and impas-
sioned,

Soul to soul of man gives light for light and
takes.

As they knew thy name of old time could we
know it,

Healer called of sickness, slayer invoked of
wrong,

Light of eyes that saw thy light, God, king,
priest, poet,

Song should bring thee back to heal us with
thy song.

For thy kingdom is past not away,
Nor thy power from the place thereof
hurled;

Out of heaven they shall cast not the day,
They shall cast not out song from the
world.

By the song and the light they give
We know thy works that they live;
With the gift thou hast given us of speech
We praise, we adore, we beseech,
We arise at thy bidding and follow,

We cry to thee, answer, appear,
O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,
Destroyer and healer, hear!

IN THE BAY.

I.

BEYOND the hollow sunset, ere a star
Take heart in heaven from eastward, while
the west

Fulfilled of watery resonance and rest,
Is as a port with clouds for harbor bar
To fold the fleet in of the winds from far
That stir no plume now of the bland sea's
breast;

II.

Above the soft sweep of the breathless bay
Southwestward, far past flight of night and
day,
Lower than the sunken sunset sinks, and
higher

Than dawn can freak the front of heaven with
fire,
My thought with eyes and wings made wide
makes way

To find the place of souls that I desire.

III.

If any place for any soul there be,
Disrobed and disentrained; if the might,
The fire and force that filled with ardent light
The souls whose shadow is half the light we
see,
Survive and be suppressed not of the night;
This hour should show what all day hid from
me.

IV.

Night knows not, neither is it shown to day,
By sunlight nor by starlight is it shown,
Nor to the full moon's eye nor footfall known,

Their world's untrodden and unkindled way.
Nor is the breath nor music of it blown
With sounds of winter or with winds of May.

V.

But here, where light and darkness reconciled
Hold earth between them as a weanling child
Between the balanced hands of death and
birth,

Even as they held the new-born shape of earth
When first life trembled in her limbs and
smiled,

Here hope might think to find what hope were
worth.

VI.

Past Hades, past Elysium, past the long
Slow smooth strong lapse of Lethe—past the
toil

Wherein all souls are taken as a spoil,
The Stygian web of waters—if your song
Be quenched not, O our brethren, but be strong
As ere ye too shook off our temporal coil;

VII.

If yet these twain survive your worldly breath,
Joy trampling sorrow, life devouring death,
If perfect life possess your life all through
And like your words your souls be deathless
too,

To-night, of all whom night encompasseth,
My soul would commune with one soul of you.

VIII.

Above the sunset might I see thine eyes
That were above the sundawn in our skies,
Son of the songs of morning,—thine that were
First lights to lighten that rekindling air
Where through men saw the front of England
rise

And heard thine loudest of the lyre-notes
there—

IX.

If yet thy fire have not one spark the less,
O Titan, born of her a Titaness,
Across the sunrise and the sunset's mark
Send of thy lyre one sound, thy fire one spark,
To change this face of our unworthiness,
Across this hour dividing light from dark.

X.

To change this face of our chill time, that hears
No song like thine of all that crowd its ears,
Of all its lights that lighten all day long

Sees none like thy most fleet and fiery sphere's
Outlightening Sirius—in its twilight throng
No thunder and no sunrise like thy song.

XI.

Hath not the sea-wind swept the sea-line bare
To pave with stainless fire through stainless
air
A passage for thine heavenlier feet to tread
Ungrieved of earthly floor work? hath it spread
No covering splendid as the sun-god's hair
To veil or to reveal thy lordlier head?

XII.

Hath not the sunset shown across the sea
A way majestic enough for thee?
What hour save this should be thine hour—
and mine,
If thou have care of any less divine
Than thine own soul; if thou take thought of
me,
Marlowe, as all my soul takes thought of thine?

XIII.

Before the moon's face as before the sun
The morning star and evening star are one
For all men's lands as England. O, if night
Hang hard upon us,—ere our day take flight,
Shed thou some comfort from thy day long
done
On us pale children of the latter light!

XIV.

For surely, brother and master and lord and
king,
Where'er thy footfall and thy face make spring
In all souls' eyes that meet thee wheresoe'er,
And have thy soul for sunshine and sweet air—
Some late love of thine old live land should
cling,
Some living love of England, round thee there.

XV.

Here from her shore across her sunniest sea
My soul makes question of the sun for thee,
And waves and beams make answer. When
thy feet
Made her ways flowerier and their flowers
more sweet
With childlike passage of a god to be,
Like spray these waves cast off her foemen's
fleet.

XVI.

Like foam they flung it from her, and like weed
Its wrecks were washed from scornful shoal to
shoal,
From rock to rock reverberate; and the whole
Sea laughed and lightened with a deathless
deed
That sowed our enemies in her field for seed
And made her shores fit harborage for thy soul.

XVII.

Then in her green south fields, a poor man's
child,
Thou hast thy short sweet fill of half-blown
joy,
That ripens all of us for time to cloy
With full-blown pain and passion; ere the
wild
World caught thee by the fiery heart, and
smiled
To make so swift end of the godlike boy.

XVIII.

For thou, if ever godlike foot there trod
These fields of ours, wert surely like a god.
Who knows what splendor of strange dreams
was shed
With sacred shadow and glimmer of gold and
red
From hallowed windows, over stone and sod,
On thine unbowed bright insubmissive head?

XIX.

The shadow stayed not, but the splendor stays.
Our brother, till the last of English days.
No day nor night on English earth shall be
For ever, spring nor summer, Junes nor Mays,
But somewhat as a sound or gleam of thee
Shall come on us like morning from the sea.

XX.

Like sunrise never wholly risen, nor yet
Quenched; or like sunset never wholly set,
A light to lighten as from living eyes
The cold unlit close lids of one that lies
Dead, or a ray returned from death's far skies
To fire us living lest our lives forget.

XXI.

For in that heaven what light of lights may be,
What splendor of what stars, what spheres of
flame

Sounding; that none may number nor may
name,
We know not, even thy brethren; yea, not we
Whose eyes desire the light that lightened thee,
Whose ways and thine are one way and the
same.

XXII.

But if the riddles that in sleep we read,
And trust them not, be flattering truth indeed,
As he that rose our mightiest called them,—he,
Much higher than thou as thou much higher
than we—
There, might we say, all flower of all our
seed,
All singing souls are as one sounding sea.

XXIII.

All those that here were of thy kind and kin,
Beside thee and below thee, full of love,
Full-souled for song,—and one alone above
Whose only light folds all your glories in—
With all birds' notes from nightingale to dove
Fill the world whither we too fain would win.

XXIV.

The world that sees in heaven the sovereign
light
Of sunlike Shakespeare, and the fiery night
Whose stars were watched of Webster; and
beneath,
The twin-souled brethren of the single wreath,
Grown in king's gardens, plucked from
pastoral heath,
Wrought with all flowers for all men's heart's
delight,

XXV.

And that fixed fervor, iron-red like Mars,
In the mid moving tide of tenderer stars,
That burned on loves and deeds the darkest
done,
Athwart the incestuous prisoner's bride-house
bars;
And thine, most highest of all their fires but
one,
Our morning star, sole risen before the sun.

XXVI.

And one light risen since theirs to run such
race
Thou has seen, O Phoshor, from thy pride of
place.

Thou hast seen Shelley, him that was to thee
As light to fire or dawn to lightning; me,
Me likewise, O our brother, shall thou see,
And I behold thee, face to glorious face?

XXVII.

You twain the same swift year of manhood
swept.
Down the steep darkness, and our father
wept.
And from the gleam of Apollonian tears
A holier aureole rounds your memories, kept
Most fervent-fresh of all the singing spheres,
And April-colored through all months and
years.

XXVIII.

You twain fate spared not half your fiery span;
The longer date fulfils the lesser man
Ye from beyond the dark dividing date
Stand smiling, crowned as gods with foot on
fate.
For stronger was your blessing than his ban,
And earliest whom he struck, he struck too
late.

XXIX.

Yet love and loathing, faith and unfaith yet
Bind less to greater souls in unison,
And one desire that makes three spirits as
one
Takes great and small as in one spiritual net
Woven out of hope toward what shall yet be
done
Ere hate or love remember or forget.

XXX.

Woven out of faith and hope and love too
great
To bear the bonds of life and death and fate:
Woven out of love and hope and faith too
dear
To take the print of doubt and change and
fear:
And interwoven with lines of wrath and hate
Blood-red with soils of many a sanguine year.

XXXI.

Who cannot hate, can love not; if he grieve,
His tears are barren as the unfruitful rain
That rears no harvest from the green sea's
plain,

And as thorns crackling this man's laugh is
vain.
Nor can belief touch, kindle, smite, relieve
His heart who has not heart to disbelieve.

XXXII.

But you, most perfect in your hate and love,
Our great twin-spirited brethren; you that
stand
Head by head glittering, hand made fast in
hand,
And underfoot the fang-drawn worm that
strove
To wound you living; from so far above,
Look love, not scorn, on ours that was our
land.

XXXIII.

For love we lack, and help and heat and light
To clothe us and to comfort us with might.
What help is ours to take or give? but ye—
O, more than sunrise to the blind cold sea,
That waileth aloud with all her waves all night,
Much more, being much more glorious, should
you be.

XXXIV.

As fire to frost, as ease to toil, as dew
To flowerless fields, as sleep to slackening
pain,
As hope to souls long weaned from hope
again
Returning, or as blood revived anew
To dry-drawn limbs and every pulseless vein,
Even so toward us should no man be but you.

XXXV.

One rose before the sunrise was, and one
Before the sunset, lovelier than the sun.
And now the heaven is dark and bright and
loud
With wind and starry drift and moon and
cloud,
And night's cry rings in straining sheet and
shroud,
What help is ours if hope like yours be none?

XXXVI.

O well-beloved, our brethren, if ye be,
Then are we not forsaken. This kind earth
Made fragrant once for all time with your
birth,

And bright for all men with your love, and
worth
The clasp and kiss and wedlock of the sea,
Were not your mother if not your brethren
we.

XXXVII.

Because the days were dark with gods and
kings
And in time's hand the old hours of time as
rods,
When force and fear set hope and faith at
odds,
Ye failed not nor abased your plume-plucked
wings;
And we that front not more disastrous things,
How should we fail in face of kings and gods?

XXXVIII.

For now the deep dense plumes of night are
thinned
Surely with winnowing of the glimmering wind
Whose feet are fledged with morning; and the
breath
Begins in heaven that sings the dark to death.
And all the night wherein men groaned and
sinned
Sickens at heart to hear what sundawn saith.

XXXIX.

O first-born sons of hope and fairest, ye
Whose brows first clove the thought-un-
sounded sea
Whence all the dark dead centuries rose to
bar
The spirit of man lest truth should make him
free,
The sunrise and the sunset, seeing one star,
Take heart as we to know you that ye are.

XL.

Ye rise not and ye set not; we that say
Ye rise and set like hopes that set and rise
Look yet but seaward from a land-locked bay:
But where at last the sea's line is the sky's
And truth and hope one sunlight in your eyes,
No sunrise and no sunset marks their day.

A FORSAKEN GARDEN.

IN a coign of the cliff between lowland and
highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward
and lee,

Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
 The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
 A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
 The steep square slope of the blossomless
 bed
 Where the weeds that grew green from the
 graves of its roses
 Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
 To the low last edge of the long lone land.
 If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
 Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's
 hand?

So long have the gray bare walks lain guest-
 less,
 Through branches and briers if a man make
 way,
 He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
 Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifed
 That crawls by a track none turn to climb
 To the strait waste place that the years have
 rifled
 Of all but the thorns that are touched not
 of time.

The thorns he spares when the rose is taken;
 The rocks are left when he wastes the
 plain.

The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-
 shaken,
 These remain.

Not a flower to be prest of the foot that falls
 not ;

As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots
 are dry ;
 From the thicket of thorns whence the night-
 ingale calls not,
 Could she call, there were never a rose to
 reply.

Over the meadows that blossom and wither
 Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song ;
 Only the sun and the rain come hither
 All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
 One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
 Only the wind here hovers and revels

In a round where life seems barren as death.
 Here there was laughing of old, there was
 weeping,

Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
 Whose eyes went seaward a hundred
 sleeping
 Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, 'Look
 thither,'

Did he whisper? 'Look forth from the
 flowers to the sea ;

For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-
 blossoms wither,

And men that love lightly may die—but we ?'
 And the same wind sang and the same waves
 whitened,

And or ever the garden's last petals were
 shed,

In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that
 had lightened,
 Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then
 went whither ?

And were one to the end—but what end
 who knows ?

Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,
 As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the
 rose.

Shall the dead take thought for the dead to
 love them ?

What love was ever as deep as a grave ?
 They are loveless now as the grass above
 them

Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
 Not known of the cliffs and the fields and
 the sea.

Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
 In the air now soft with a summer to be.

Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons
 hereafter

Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now
 or weep,

When as they that are free now of weeping
 and laughter

We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again forever ;

Here change may come not till all change
 end.

From the graves they have made they shall
 rise up never,

Who have left nought living to ravage and
 rend.

Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground
 growing,

While the sun and the rain live, these shall
 be ;

Till a last wind's breath upon all these blow-
 ing

Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff
 crumble,
 Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs
 drink,
 Till the strength of the waves of the high
 tides humble
 The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,
 Here now in his triumph where all things
 falter,
 Stretched out on the spoils that his own
 hand spread,
 As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
 Death lies dead.

RELICS.

THIS flower that smells of honey and the sea,
 White laurustine, seems in my hand to be
 A white star made of memory long ago
 Lit in the heaven of dear times dead to me.

A star out of the skies love used to know
 Here held in hand, a stray left yet to show
 What flowers my heart was full of in the
 days
 That are long since gone down dead memory's
 flow.

Dead memory that revives on doubtful ways,
 Half hearkening what the buried season says
 Out of the world of the unapparent dead
 Where the lost Aprils are, and the lost
 Mays.

Flower, once I knew thy star-white brethren
 bred
 Nigh where the last of all the land made
 head
 Against the sea, a keen-faced promontory,
 Flowers on salt wind and sprinkled sea-dews
 fed.

Their hearts were glad of the free place's
 glory;
 He wind that sang them all his stormy story
 Had talked all winter to the sleepless
 spray,
 And as the sea's their hues were hard and
 hoary.

Like things born of the sea and the bright
 day,
 They laughed out at the years that could not
 slay,
 Live sons and joyous of unquiet hours,
 And stronger than all storms that range for
 prey.

And in the close indomitable flowers
 A keen-edged odor of the sun and showers
 Was as the smell of the fresh honeycomb
 Made sweet for mouths of none but para-
 mours.

Out of the hard green wall of leaves that
 clomb
 They showed like windfalls of the snow-soft
 foam,
 Or feathers from the weary south-wind's
 wing,
 Fair as the spray that it came shoreward
 from.

And thou, as white, what word hast thou to
 bring?
 If my heart hearken, whereof wilt thou sing?
 For some sign surely thou too hast to bear,
 Some word far south was taught thee of the
 spring.

White like a white rose, not like these that
 were
 Taught of the wind's mouth and the winter
 air,
 Poor tender thing of soft Italian bloom,
 Where once thou grewest, what else for me
 grew there.

Born in what spring and on what city's tomb,
 By whose hand wast thou reached, and
 plucked for whom?
 There hangs about thee, could the soul's
 sense tell,
 An odor as of love and of love's doom.

Of days more sweet than thou wast sweet to
 smell,
 Of flower-soft thoughts that came to flower
 and fell,
 Of loves that lived a lily's life and died,
 Of dreams now dwelling where dead roses
 dwell.

O white birth of the golden mountain-side
 That for the sun's love makes its bosom wide
 At sunrise, and with all its woods and
 flowers
 Takes in the morning to its heart of pride!

Thou hast a word of that one land of ours,
 And of the fair town called of the fair towers,
 A word for me of my San Gimignano,
 A word of April's greenest-girdled hours.

Of the breached walls whereon the wall-
flowers ran
Called of Saint Fina, breachless now of man,
Though time with soft feet break them
stone by stone,
Who breaks down hour by hour his own
reign's span.

Of the cliff overcome and overgrown
That all that flowerage clothed as flesh clothes
bone,
That garment of acacias made for May,
Whereof here lies one witness overblown.

The fair brave trees with all their flowers at
play,
How king-like they stood up into the day!
How sweet the day was with them, and the
night!
Such words of message have dead flowers to
say.

This that the winter and the wind made
bright,
And this that lived upon Italian light,
Before I throw them and these words away,
Who knows but I what memories too take
flight?

AT A MONTH'S END.

THE night last night was strange and shaken :
More strange the change of you and me.
Once more, for the old love's love forsaken,
We went out once more toward the sea.

For the old love's love-sake dead and buried,
One last time, one more and no more,
We watched the waves set in, the serried
Spears of the tide storming the shore.

Hardly we saw the high moon hanging,
Heard hardly through the windy night
Far waters ringing, low reefs clanging,
Under wan skies and waste white light.

With chafe and change of surges chiming.
The clashing channels rocked and rang
Large music, wave to wild wave timing,
And all the choral water sang.

Faint lights fell this way, that way floated,
Quick sparks of sea-fire keen like eyes
From the rolled surf that flashed, and noted
Shores and faint cliffs and bays and skies.

The ghost of sea that shrank up sighing
At the sand's edge, a short sad breath
Trembling to touch the goal, and dying
With weak heart heaved up once in death—

The rustling sand and shingle shaken
With light sweet touches and small sound—
These could not move us, could not waken
Hearts to look forth, eyes to look round.

Silent we went an hour together,
Under gray skies by waters white.
Our hearts were full of windy weather,
Clouds and blown stars and broken light.

Full of cold clouds and moonbeams drifted
And streaming storms and straying fires,
Our souls in us were stirred and shifted
By doubts and dreams and foiled desires.

Across, aslant, a scudding sea-mew
Swam, dipped, and dropped, and grazed
the sea :
And one with me I could not dream you ;
And one with you I could not be.

As the white wing the white wave's fringes
Touched and slid over and flashed past—
As a pale cloud a pale flame tinges
From the moon's lowest light and last—

As a star feels the sun and falters,
Touched to death by diviner eyes—
As on the old gods' untended altars
The old fire of withered worship dies—

(Once only, once the shrine relighted
Sees the last fiery shadow shine,
Last shadow of flame and faith benighted,
Sees falter and flutter and fail the shrine)

So once with fiery breath and flying
Your winged heart touched mine and went,
And the swift spirits kissed, and sighing,
Sundered and smiled and were content.

That only touch, that feeling only,
Enough we found, we found too much ;
For the unlit shrine is hardly lonely
As one the old fire forgets to touch.

Slight as the sea's sight of the sea-mew,
Slight as the sun's sight of the star :
Enough to show one must not deem you
For love's sake other than you are.

Who snares and tames with fear and danger
A bright beast of a fiery kin,

Only to mar, only to change her
Sleek supple soul and splendid skin?

Easy with blows to mar and maim her,
Easy with bonds to bind and bruise;
What profit, if she yield her tamer
The limbs to mar, the soul to lose?

Best leave or take the perfect creature,
Take all she is or leave complete;
Transmute you will not form or feature,
Change feet for wings or wings for feet.

Strange eyes, new limbs, can no man give
her;
Sweet is the sweet thing as it is.
No soul she hath, we see, to outlive her;
Hath she for that no lips to kiss?

So may one read his weird, and reason,
And with vain drugs assuage no pain.
For each man in his loving season
Fools and is fooled of these in vain.

Charms that allay not any longing,
Spells that appease not any grief,
Time brings us all by handfuls, wronging
All hurts with nothing of relief.

Ah, too soon shot, the fool's bolt misses!
What help? the world is full of loves;
Night after night of running kisses,
Chirp after chirp of changing doves.

Should Love disown or disesteem you
For loving one man more or less?
You could not tame your light white sea-mew,
Nor I my sleek black pantheress.

For a new soul let whoso please pray,
We are what life made us, and shall be.
For you the jungle and me the sea-spray,
And south for you and north for me.

But this one broken foam-white feather
I throw you off the hither wing,
Splashed stiff with sea-scurf and salt weather,
This song for sleep to learn and sing—

Sing in your ear when, daytime over,
You, couched at long length on hot sand
With some sleek sun-discolored lover,
Wince from his breath as from a brand:

Till the acrid hour aches out and ceases,
And the sheathed eyeball sleeper swims,
The deep flank smooths its dimpling creases,
And passion loosens all the limbs:

Till dreams of sharp gray north-sea weather
Fall faint upon your fiery sleep,
As on strange sands a strayed bird's feather
The wind may choose to lose or keep.

But I, who leave my queen of panthers,
As a tired honey-heavy bee
Gilt with sweet dust from gold-grained anthers
Leaves the rose-chalice, what for me?

From the ardors of the chalice centre,
From the amorous anthers' golden grime,
That scorch and smutch all wings that enter,
I fly forth hot from honey-time.

But as to a bee's gilt thighs and winglets
The flower-dust with the flower-smell clings;
As a snake's mobile rampant ringlets
Leave the sand marked with print of rings;

So to my soul in surer fashion
Your savage stamp and savor hangs;
The print and perfume of old passion,
The wild-beast mark of panther's fangs.

SESTINA.

I SAW my soul at rest upon a day
As the bird sleeping in the nest of night,
Among soft leaves that give the starlight way
To touch its wings but not its eyes with light;
So that it knew as one in visions may,
And knew not as men waking, of delight.

This was the measure of my soul's delight;
It had no power of joy to fly by day,
Nor part in the large lordship of the light;
But in a secret moon-beholden way
Had all its will of dreams and pleasant night,
And all the love and life that sleepers may.

But such life's triumph as men waking may
It might not have to feed its faint delight
Between the stars by night and sun by day,
Shut up with green leaves and a little light
Because its way was as a lost star's way,
A world's not wholly known of day or night.

All loves and dreams and sounds and gleams
of night
Made it all music that such minstrels may,
And all they had they gave it of delight;
But in the full face of the fire of day
What place shall be for any starry light,
What part of heaven in all the wide sun's
way?

Yet the soul woke not, sleeping by the way,
 Watched as a nursling of the large-eyed
 night,
 And sought no strength nor knowledge of the
 day,
 Nor closer touch conclusive of delight,
 Nor mightier joy nor truer than dreamers may,
 Nor more of song than they, nor more of
 light.

For who sleeps once and sees the secret light
 Whereby sleep shows the soul a fairer way
 Between the rise and rest of day and night,
 Shall care no more to fare as all men may,
 But he is place of pain or of delight,
 There shall he dwell, beholding night as
 day.

Song, have thy day and take thy fill of light
 Before the night be fallen across thy way;
 Sing while he may, man hath no long delight.

THE YEAR OF THE ROSE.

FROM the depths of the green garden-closes
 Where the summer in darkness dozes
 Till autumn pluck from his hand
 An hour-glass that holds not a sand;
 From the maze that a flower-belt encloses
 To the stones and sea-grass on the strand
 How red was the reign of the roses
 Over the rose-crowned land!

The year of the rose is brief;
 From the first blade blown to the sheaf,
 From the thin green leaf to the gold,
 It has time to be sweet and grow old,
 To triumph and leave not a leaf
 For witness in winter's sight
 How lovers once in the light
 Would mix their breath with its breath,
 And its spirit was quenched not of night,
 As love is subdued not of death.

In the red-rose land not a mile
 Of the meadows from stile to stile,
 Of the valleys from stream to stream,
 But the air was a long sweet dream
 And the earth was a sweet wide smile
 Red-mouthed of a goddess, returned
 From the sea which had borne her and
 burned,
 That with one swift smile of her mouth
 Looked full on the north as it yearned,
 And the north was more than the south.

For the north, when winter was long,
 In his heart had made him a song,
 And clothed it with wings of desire,
 And shod it with shoon as of fire,
 To carry the tale of his wrong
 To the south-west wind by the sea,
 That who might bear it but he
 To the ears of the goddess unknown
 Who waits till her time shall be
 To take the world for a throne?

In the earth beneath, and above
 In the heaven where her name is love,
 She warms with light from her eyes
 The seasons of life as they rise,
 And her eyes are as eyes of a dove,
 But the wings that lift her and bear
 As an eagle's, and all her hair
 As fire by wind's breath curled,
 And her passage is song through the air,
 And her presence is spring through the world.

So turned she northward and came,
 And the white-thorn land was aflame
 With the fires that were shed from her feet,
 That the north, by her love made sweet,
 Should be called by a rose-red name;
 And a murmur was heard as of doves,
 And a music beginning of loves
 In the light that the roses made,
 Such light as the music loves.
 The music of man with maid.

But the days drop one upon one,
 And a chill soft wind is begun
 In the heart of the rose-red maze
 That weeps for the roseleaf days
 And the reign of the rose undone
 That ruled so long in the light,
 And by spirit, and not by sight,
 Through the darkness thrilled with its breath,
 Still ruled in the viewless night,
 As love might rule over death.

The time of lovers is brief;
 From the fair first joy to the grief
 That tells when love is grown old,
 From the warm wild kiss to the cold,
 From the red to the white-rose leaf,
 They have but a season to seem
 As roseleaves lost on a stream
 That part not and pass not apart
 As a spirit from dream to dream,
 As a sorrow from heart to heart.

From the bloom and the gloom that encloses
 The death-bed of Love where he dozes

Till a relic be left not of sand
To the hour-glass that breaks in his hand ;
From the change in the gray garden-closes
To the last stray grass of the strand,
A rain and ruin of roses
Over the red rose-land.

A WASTED VIGIL

I.

COULDST thou not watch with me one hour ?
Behold,
Dawn skims the sea with flying feet of gold,
With sudden feet that graze the gradual sea ;
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

II.

What, not one hour ? for star by star the night
Falls, and her thousands world by world take
flight ;
They die, and day survives, and what of thee ?
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

III.

Lo, far in heaven the web of night undone,
And on the sudden sea the gradual sun ;
Wave to wave answers, tree responds to tree ;
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

IV.

Sunbeam by sunbeam creeps from line to line,
Foil by foam quickens on the brightening
brine ;
Sail by sail passes, flower by flower gets free ;
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

V.

Last year, a brief while since, an age ago,
A whole year past, with bud and bloom and
snow,
O moon that wast in heaven, what friends
were we !
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

VI.

Old moons, and last year's flowers, and last
year's snows
Who now saith to thee, moon ? or who saith,
rose ?
O dust and ashes, once found fair to see !
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

VII.

O dust and ashes, once thought sweet to
smell !
With me it is not, is it with thee well ?
O sea-drift blown from windward back to lee !
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

VIII.

The old year's dead hands are full of their
dead flowers,
The old days are full of dead old loves of ours.
Born as a rose, and briefer born than she ;
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

IX.

Could two days live again of that dead year,
One would say, seeking us and passing here,
Where is she ? and one answering, *Where is
he ?*
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

X.

Nay, those two lovers are not anywhere ;
If we were they, none knows us what we were,
Nor aught of all their barren grief and glee.
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

XI.

Half false, half fair, all feeble, be my verse
Upon thee not for blessing nor for curse
For some must stand, and some must fall or
flee ;
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

XII.

As a new moon above spent stars thou wast ;
But stars endure after the moon is past.
Couldst thou not watch one hour, though I
watch three ?
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

XIII.

What of the night ? The night is full, the
tide
Storms inland, the most ancient rocks divide ;
Yet some endure, and bow nor head nor
knee ;
Couldst thou not watch with me ?

XIV.

Since thou art not as these are, go thy ways ;
Thou hast no part in all my nights and days.
Lie still, sleep on, be glad—as such things
be ;
Thou couldst not watch with me.

THE COMPLAINT OF LISA.

(Double Sestina.)

DECAMERON, X. 7.

THERE is no woman living that draws breath
 So sad as I, though all things sadden her.
 There is not one upon life's weariest way
 Who is weary as I am weary of all but death.
 'Toward whom I look as looks the sunflower
 All day with all his whole soul toward the
 sun;
 While in the sun's sight I make moan all
 day,
 And all night on my sleepless maiden bed
 Weep and call out on death, O Love, and
 thee,
 That thou or he would take me to the dead,
 And know not what thing evil I have done
 That life should lay such heavy hand on me.

Alas, Love, what is this thou wouldst with
 me?

What honor shalt thou have to quench my
 breath,

Or what shall my heart broken profit thee?

O Love, O great god Love, what have I
 done,

That thou shouldst hunger so after my death?
 My heart is harmless as my life's first day:
 Seek out some false fair woman, and plague
 her

Till her tears even as my tears fill her bed:
 I am the least flower in thy flowery way,
 But till my time be come that I be dead
 Let me live out my flower-time in the sun
 Though my leaves shut before the sunflower.

O Love, Love, Love, the kingly sunflower!
 Shall he the sun hath looked on look on me,
 That live down here in shade, out of the sun,
 Here living in the sorrow and shadow of
 death?

Shall he that feeds his heart full of the day
 Care to give mine eyes light, or my lips
 breath?

Because she loves him shall my lord love her
 Who is as a worm in my lord's kingly way?
 I shall not see him or know him alive or
 dead;

But thou, I know thee, O Love, and pray to
 thee

That in brief while my brief life-days be done,
 And the worm quickly make my marriage-
 bed.

For underground there is no sleepless bed:
 But here since I beheld my sunflower
 These eyes have slept not, seeing all night
 and day

His sunlike eyes, and face fronting the sun.
 Wherefore if anywhere be any death,
 I would fain find and fold him fast to me,
 That I may sleep with the world's eldest
 dead,

With her that died seven centuries since, and
 her

That went last night down the night-wander-
 ing way.

For this is sleep indeed, when labor is done,
 Without love, without dreams, and without
 breath,

And without thought, O name unnamed! of
 thee.

Ah, but, forgetting all things, shall I thee?
 Wilt thou not be as now about my bed.

There underground as here before the sun?

Shall not thy vision vex me alive and dead,

Thy moving vision without form or breath?

I read long since the bitter tale of her

Who read the tale of Launcelot on a day,

And died. And had no quiet after death,

But was moved ever along a weary way,

Lost with her love in the underworld; ah me,

O my king, O my lordly sunflower,

Would God to me too such a thing were done!

But if such sweet and bitter things be done,
 Then, flying from life, I shall not fly from thee.

For in that living world without a sun

Thy vision will lay hold upon me dead,

And meet and mock me, and mar my peace
 in death.

Yet if being wroth God had such pity on her,
 Who was a sinner and foolish in her day,
 That even in hell they twain should breathe
 one breath,

Why should he not in some wise pity me?

So if I sleep not in my soft strait bed

I may look up and see my sunflower

As he the sun, in some divine strange way.

O poor my heart, well knowest thou in what
 way

This sore sweet evil unto us was done.

For on a holy and a heavy day

I was arisen out of my still small bed

To see the knights tilt, and one said to me

'The king,' and seeing him, somewhat stop-
 ped my breath,

And if the girl spake more, I heard not her,

For only I saw what I shall see when dead,
A kingly flower of knights, a sunflower,
That shown against the sunlight like the sun,
And like a fire, O heart, consuming thee,
The fire of love that lights the pyre of death.

Howbeit I shall not die an evil death
Who have loved in such a sad and sinless
way,

That this my love, lord, was no shame to thee.
So when mine eyes are shut against the sun,
O my soul's sun, O the world's sunflower,
Thou nor no man will quite despise me dead.
And dying I pray with all my low last breath
That thy whole life may be as was that day,
That feast-day that made troth-plight death
and me,

Giving the world light of thy great deeds
done ;

And that fair face brightening thy bridal bed,
That God be good as God hath been to her.

That all things goodly and glad remain with
her,
All things that make glad life and goodly
death ;

That as a bee sucks from a sunflower
Honey, when summer draws delighted breath,
Her soul may drink of thy soul in like way,
And love make life a fruitful marriage-bed
Where day may bring forth fruits of joy to
day

And night to night till days and nights be
dead.

And as she gives light of her love to thee,
Give thou to her the old glory of days long
done ;

And either give some heat of light to me,
To warm me where I sleep without the sun.

O sunflower made drunken with the sun,
O knight whose lady's heart draws thine to
her,

Great king, glad lover, I have a word to thee.
There is a weed lives out of the sun's way,
Tid from the heat deep in the meadow's bed,
That swoons and whitens at the wind's least
breath,

A flower star-shaped, that all a summer day
Will gaze her soul out on the sunflower
For very love till twilight finds her dead.
But the great sunflower heeds not her poor
death,

Knows not when all her loving life is done ;
And so much knows my lord the king of me.

Aye, all day long he has no eye for me ;
With golden eye following the golden sun

From rose-colored to purple-pillowed bed,
From birthplace to the flame-lit place of
death,

From eastern end to western of his way.
So mine eye follows thee, my sunflower,
So the white star-flower turns and yearns to
thee,

The sick weak weed, not well alive or dead,
Trod underfoot if any pass by her,
Pale, without color of summer or summer
breath

In the shrunk shuddering petals, that have
done

No work but love, and die before the day.

But thou, to-day, to-morrow, and every day,
Be glad and great, O love whose love slays
me.

Thy fervent flower made fruitful from the sun
Shall drop its golden seed in the world's way,
That all men thereof nourished shall praise
thee

For grain and flower and fruit of works well
done ;

Till thy shed seed, O shining sunflower,
Bring forth such growth of the world's garden-
bed

As like the sun shall outlive age and death.
And yet I would thine heart had heed of her
Who loves thee alive ; but not till she be
dead.

Come, Love, then, quickly, and take her ut-
most breath.

Song, speak for me who am dumb as are the
dead ;

From my sad bed of tears I send forth thee,
To fly all day from sun's birth to sun's death
Down the sun's way after the flying sun,
For love of her that gave thee wings and
breath

Ere day be done, to seek the sunflower.

FOR THE FEAST OF GIORDANO BRUNO,

PHILOSOPHER AND MARTYR.

I.

SON of the lightning and the light that glows
Beyond the lightning's or the morning's
light,

Soul splendid with all-righteous love of
right,

In whose keen fire all hopes and fears and
woes

Were clean consumed, and from their ashes
 rose
 Transfigured, and intolerable to sight
 Save of purged eyes whose lids had cast
 off night,
 In love's and wisdom's likeness when they
 close,
 Embracing, and between them truth stands
 fast,
 Embraced of either; thou whose feet
 were set
 On English earth while this was England
 yet,
 Our friend that art, our Sidney's friend that
 wast,
 Heart hardier found and higher than all men's
 past,
 Shall we not praise thee though thine
 own forget?

II.

Lift up thy light on us and on thine own,
 O soul whose spirit on earth was as a
 rod
 To scourge off priests, a sword to pierce
 their God,
 A staff for man's free thought to walk alone,
 A lamp to lead him far from shrine and throne
 On ways untrodden where his fathers
 trod
 Ere earth's heart withered at a high
 priest's nod
 And all men's mouths that made not prayer
 made moan.
 From bonds and torments and the ravening
 flame
 Surely thy spirit of sense rose up to greet
 Lucretius, where such only spirits meet,
 And walk with him apart till Shelley came
 To make the heaven of heavens more
 heavenly sweet
 And mix with yours a third incorporate name.

AVE ATQUE VALE.

IN MEMORY OF CHARLES BAUDELAIRE.

Nous devrions pourtant lui porter quelques fleurs;
 Les morts, les pauvres morts, ont de grandes douleurs,
 Et quand Octobre souffle, émondeur des vieux arbres,
 Son vent mélancolique a l'entour de leurs marbres,
 Certe, ils doivent trouver les vivants bien ingrats.

Les Fleurs du Mal.

I.

SHALL I strew on thee rose or rue or laurel,
 Brother, on this that was the veil of thee?

Or quiet sea-flower moulded by the sea,
 Or simplest growth of meadow-sweet or sorrel,
 Such as the summer-sleepy Dryads weave,
 Waked up by snow-soft sudden rains at eve?
 Or wilt thou rather, as on earth before,
 Half-faded fiery blossoms, pale with heat
 And full of bitter summer, but more sweet
 To thee than gleanings of a northern shore
 Trod by no tropic feet?

II.

For always thee the fervid languid glories
 Allured of heavier suns in mightier skies;
 Thine ears knew all the wandering watery
 sighs
 Where the sea sobs round Lesbian promon-
 tories,
 The barren kiss of piteous wave to wave
 That knows not where is that Leucadian
 grave
 Which hides too deep the supreme head of
 song.
 Ah, salt and sterile as her kisses were,
 The wild sea winds her and the green
 gulfs bear
 Hither and thither, and vex and work her
 wrong,
 Blind gods that cannot spare.

III.

Thou sawest, in thine old singing season,
 brother,
 Secrets and sorrows unbeheld of us:
 Fierce loves, and lovely leaf-buds poison-
 ous,
 Bare to thy subtler eye, but for none other
 Blowing by night in some unbreathed-in
 clime;
 The hidden harvest of luxurious time,
 Sin without shape, and pleasure without
 speech;
 And where strange dreams in a tumultu-
 ous sleep
 Make the shut eyes of stricken spirit
 weep;
 And with each face thou sawest the shadow on
 each,
 Seeing as men sow men reap.

IV.

O sleepless heart and sombre soul unsleeping,
 That were athirst for sleep and no more
 life
 And no more love, for peace and no more
 strife!
 Now the dim gods of death have in their
 keeping

Spirit and body and all the springs of
 song,
 Is it well now where love can do no
 wrong,
 Where stingless pleasure has no foam or fang
 Behind the unopening closure of her lips?
 Is it not well where soul from body slips
 And flesh from bone divides without a pang
 As dew from flower-bell drips?

v.

It is enough; the end and the beginning
 Are one thing to thee, who art past the
 end.
 O hand unclasped of unbeholden friend,
 For thee no fruits to pluck, no palms for
 winning,
 No triumph and no labor and no lust,
 Only dead yew-leaves and a little dust.
 O quiet eyes wherein the light saith nought,
 Whereto the day is dumb, nor any night
 With obscure finger silences your sight,
 Nor in your speech the sudden soul speaks
 thought,
 Sleep, and have sleep for light.

vi.

Now all strange hours and all strange loves
 are over,
 Dreams and desires and sombre songs
 and sweet,
 Hast thou found place at the great knees
 and feet
 Of some pale Titan-woman like a lover,
 Such as thy vision here solicited,
 Under the shadow of her fair vast head,
 The deep division of prodigious breasts,
 The solemn slope of mighty limbs asleep,
 The weight of awful tresses that still keep
 The savor and shade of old-world pine-forests
 Where the wet hill-winds weep?

vii.

Hast thou found any likeness for thy vision?
 O gardener of strange flowers, what bud,
 what bloom,
 Hast thou found sown, what gathered in
 the gloom?
 What of despair, of rapture, of derision,
 What of life is there, what of ill or good?
 Are the fruits gray like dust or bright like
 blood?
 Does the dim ground grow any seed of ours,
 The faint fields quicken any terrene root,
 In low lands where the sun and moon are
 mute
 And all the stars keep silence? Are there
 flowers
 At all, or any fruit?

viii.

Alas, but though my flying song flies after,
 O sweet strange elder singer, thy more
 fleet
 Singing, and footprints of thy fleeter feet,
 Some dim derision of mysterious laughter
 From the blind tongueless warders of the
 dead,
 Some gainless glimpse of Proserpine's
 veiled head,
 Some little sound of unregarded tears
 Wept by effaced unprofitable eyes,
 And from pale mouths some cadence of
 dead sighs—
 These only, these the hearkening spirit hears,
 Sees only such things rise.

ix.

Thou art far too far for wings of words to
 follow,
 Far too far off for thought or any prayer.
 What ails us with thee, who art wind and
 air?
 What ails us gazing where all seen is hollow?
 Yet with some fancy, yet with some
 desire,
 Dreams pursue death as winds a flying
 fire,
 Our dreams pursue our dead and do not find.
 Still, and more swift than they, the thin
 flames flies,
 The low light fails us in elusive skies,
 Still the foiled earnest ear is deaf, and blind
 Are still the eluded eyes.

x.

Not thee, O never thee, in all time's changes,
 Not thee, but this the sound of thy sad
 soul,
 The shadow of thy swift spirit, this shut
 scroll
 I lay my hand on, and not death estranges
 My spirit from communion of thy song—
 These memories and these melodies that
 throng
 Veiled porches of a Muse funereal—
 These I salute, these touch, these clasp
 and fold
 As though a hand were in my hand to
 hold,
 Or through mine ears a mourning musical
 Of many mourners rolled.

xi.

I among these, I also, in such station
 As when the pyre was charred, and piled
 the sods,

And offering to the dead made, and their
 gods,
 The old mourners had, standing to make
 libation,
 I stand, and to the gods and to the dead
 Do reverence without prayer or praise,
 and shed
 Offering to these unknown, the gods of gloom,
 And what of honey and spice my seed-
 lands bear,
 And what I may of fruits in this chilled
 air,
 And lay, Orestes-like, across the tomb
 A curl of severed hair.

XII.

But by no hand nor any treason stricken,
 Not like the low-lying head of Him, the
 King,
 The flame that made of Troy a ruinous
 thing,
 Thou liest and on this dust no tears could
 quicken
 There fall no tears like theirs that all
 men hear
 Fall tear by sweet imperishable tear
 Down the opening leaves of holy poet's pages.
 Thee not Orestes, not Electra mourns;
 But bending us-ward with memorial urns
 The most high Muses that fulfil all ages
 Weep, and our God's heart yearns.

XIII.

For, sparing of his sacred strength, not often
 Among us darkling here the lord of light
 Makes manifest his music and his might
 In hearts that open and in lips that soften
 With the soft flame and heat of songs
 that shine.
 Thy lips indeed he touched with bitter
 wine,
 And nourished them indeed with bitter bread;
 Yet surely from his hand thy soul's food
 came,
 The fire that scarred thy spirit at his
 flame
 Was lighted, and thine hungering heart he
 fed
 Who feeds our hearts with fame.

XIV.

Therefore he too now at thy soul's sunseting,
 God of all suns and songs, he too bends
 down

To mix his laurel with thy cypress crown
 And save thy dust from blame and from for-
 getting.
 Therefore he too, seeing all thou wert
 and art,
 Compassionate, with sad and sacred
 heart,
 Mourns thee of many his children the last
 dead,
 And hallows with strange tears and alien
 sighs
 Thine unmelodious mouth and sunless,
 eyes,
 And over thine irrevocable head
 Sheds light from the under skies.

XV.

And one weeps with him in the ways Lethean,
 And stains with tears her changing
 bosom chill;
 That obscure Venus of the hollow hill,
 That thing transformed which was the
 Cytherean,
 With lips that lost their Grecian laugh
 divine
 Long since, and face no more called Ery-
 cine
 A ghost, a bitter and luxurious god.
 Thee also with fair flesh and singing
 spell
 Did she, a sad and second prey, compel
 Into the footless places once more trod,
 And shadows hot from hell.

XVI.

And now no sacred staff shall break in blos-
 som,
 No choral salutation lure to light
 A spirit with perfume and sweet night
 And love's tired eyes and hands and barren
 bosom.
 There is no help for these things; none
 to mend,
 And none to mar; not all our songs, O
 friend,
 Will make death clear or make life durable.
 Howbeit with rose and ivy and wild vine
 And with wild notes about this dust of
 thine
 At least I fill the place where white dreams
 dwell
 And wreath an unseen shrine.

XVII.

Sleep; and if life was bitter to thee, pardon,
 If sweet, give thanks; thou hast no more
 to live
 And to give thanks is good, and to for-
 give.
 Out of the mystic and the mournful garden
 Where all day through thine hands in
 barren braid
 Wove the sick flowers of secrecy and
 shade,
 Green buds of sorrow and sin, and remnants
 gray,
 Sweet-smelling, pale with poison, san-
 guine-hearted,
 Passions that sprang from sleep and
 thoughts that started,
 Shall death not bring us all as thee one day
 Among the days departed?

XVIII.

For thee, O now a silent soul, my brother,
 Take at my hands this garland, and fare-
 well.
 Thin is the leaf, and chill the wintry
 smell,
 And chill the solemn earth, a fatal mother,
 With sadder than the Niobeian womb,
 And in the hollow of her breasts a tomb.
 Content thee, howsoe'er, whose days are
 done:
 There lies not any troublous thing before,
 Nor sight nor sound to war against thee
 more,
 For whom all winds are quiet as the sun,
 All waters as the shore.

MEMORIAL VERSES.

ON THE DEATH OF THEOPHILE GAUTIER.

DEATH, what hast thou to do with me? So
 saith
 Love, with eyes set against the face of Death;
 What have I done, O thou strong Death,
 to thee,
 That mine own lips should wither from thy
 breath?
 Though thou be blind as fire or as the sea,
 Why should thy waves and storms make war
 on me?
 Is it for hate thou hast to find me fair,
 Or for desire to kiss, if it might be,

My very mouth of song, and kill me there?
 So with keen rains vexing his crownless hair,
 With bright feet bruised from no delightful
 way,

Through darkness and the disenchanted air,

Lost Love went weeping half a winter's day.
 And the armed wind that smote him seemed
 to say,

How shall the dew live when the dawn is
 fled,

Or wherefore should the Mayflower outlast
 May?

Then Death took Love by the right hand and
 said,

Smiling: Come now and look upon thy dead.
 But Love cast down the glories of his eyes,
 And bowed down like a flower his flowerless
 head.

And Death spake, saying: What ails thee in
 such wise,
 Being God, to shut thy sight up from the
 skies?

If thou canst see not, hast thou ears to
 hear?

Or is thy soul too as a leaf that dies?

Even as he spake with fleshless lips of fear,
 But soft as sleep sings in a tired man's ear,
 Behold, the winter was not, and its might
 Fell, and fruits broke forth of the barren
 year.

And upon earth was largess of great light,
 And moving music winged for world-wide
 flight,

And shapes and sounds of gods beheld and
 heard

And day's foot set upon the neck of night.

And with such song the hollow ways were
 stirred

As of a god's heart hidden in a bird,
 Or as the whole soul of the sun in spring
 Should find full utterance in one flower-soft
 word,

And all the season should break forth and
 sing

From one flower's lips, in one rose triumph-
 ing;

Such breath and light of song as of a flame
 Made ears and spirits of them that heard it
 ring.

And Love beholding knew not for the same
 The shape that led him, nor in face nor name,
 For he was bright and great of thews and
 fair,
 And in Love's eyes he was not Death, but
 Fame.

Not that gray ghost whose life is empty and
 bare
 And his limbs moulded out of mortal air,
 A cloud of change that shifts into a shower
 And dies and leaves no light for time to wear:

But a god clothed with his own joy and power,
 A god re-risen out of his mortal hour
 Immortal, king and lord of time and space,
 With eyes that look on them as from a tower.

And where he stood the pale sepulchral place
 Bloomed, as new life might in a bloodless
 face,
 And where men sorrowing came to seek a
 tomb
 With funeral flowers and tears for grief and
 grace,

They saw with light as of a world in bloom
 The portal of the House of Fame illumine
 The ways of life wherein we toiling tread,
 And watched the darkness as a brand con-
 sume.

And through the gates where rule the death-
 less dead
 The sound of a new singer's soul was shed
 That sang among his kinsfolk, and a beam
 Shot from the star on a new ruler's head.

A new star lighting the Lethean stream,
 A new song mixed into the song supreme
 Made of all souls of singers and their
 might,
 That makes of life and time and death a
 dream.

Thy star, thy song, O soul that in our sight
 Wast as a sun that made for man's delight
 Flowers and all fruits in season, being so
 near
 The sun-god's face, our god that gives us
 light.

To him of all gods that we love or fear
 Thou among all men by thy name wast dear,
 Dear to the god that gives us spirit of song
 To bind and burn all hearts of men that hear.

The god that makes men's words too swe
 and strong
 For life or time or death to do them wrong,
 Who sealed with his thy spirit for a sign
 And filled it with his breath thy whole life long.

Who made thy moist lips fiery with new wine
 Pressed from the grapes of song the sovereign
 vine,
 And with all love of all things loveliest
 Gave thy soul power to make them mon-
 divine.

That thou might'st breathe upon the breath-
 less rest
 Of marble, till the brows and lips and breast
 Felt fall from off them as a cancelled curse
 That speechless wherewith they lived oppress,

Who gave thee strength and heat of spirit to
 pierce
 All clouds of form and color that disperse,
 And leave the spirit of beauty to remould
 In types of clean chryselephantine verse.

Who gave thee words more golden than fine
 gold
 To carve in shapes more glorious than of old,
 And build thy songs up in the sight of time
 As statues set in godhead manifold:

In sight and scorn of temporal change and
 clime
 That meet the sun re-risen with reflux rhyme
 —As god to god might answer face to face—
 From lips whereon the morning strikes sublime.

Dear to the god, our god who gave thee place
 Among the chosen of days, the royal race,
 The lords of light, whose eyes of old and
 ears
 Saw even on earth and heard him for a space.

There are the souls of those once mortal years
 That wrought with fire of joy and light of
 tears
 In words divine as deeds that grew thereof
 Such music as he swoons with love who hears.

There are the lives that lighten from above
 Our under lives, the spherul souls that move
 Through the ancient heaven of song-illumined
 air
 Whence we that hear them singing die with
 love.

There all the crowned Hellenic heads, and
there
The old gods who made men godlike as they
were,

The lyric lips wherefrom all songs take fire,
Live eyes, and light of Apollonian hair.

There, round the sovereign passion of that lyre
Which the stars hear and tremble with desire,
The ninefold light Pierian is made one
That here we see divided, and aspire,

Seeing, after this or that crown to be won;
But where they hear the singing of the sun,
All form, all sound, all color, and all thought
Are as one body and soul in unison.

There the song sung shines as a picture
wrought

The painted mouths sing that on earth say
nought,

The carven limbs have sense of blood and
growth
And large-eyed life that seeks nor lacks not
aught.

There all the music of thy living mouth
Lives, and all lovers wrought of thine hand in
youth

And bound about the breasts and brows
with gold

And colored pale or dusk from north to south.

Fair living things made to thy will of old,
Born of thy lips, no births of mortal mould,
That in the world of song about thee wait
Where thought and truth are one and mani-
fold.

Within the graven lintels of the gate
That here divides our vision and our fate,
The dreams we walk in and the truths of
sleep,
All sense and spirit have life inseparate.

There what one thinks, in his to grasp and
keep;

There are no dreams, but very joys to reap,
No foiled desires that die before delight,
No fears to see across our joys and weep.

There hast thou all thy will of thought and
sight,

All hope for harvest, and all heaven for flight;
The sunrise of whose golden-mouthed glad
head

To paler songless ghosts was heat and light.

Here where the sunset of our year is red
Men think of thee as of the summer dead,
Gone forth before the snows, before thy day,
With unshod feet, with brows unchapleted.

Couldst thou not wait till age had wound, they
say,

Round those wreathed brows his soft white
blossoms? Nay

Why shouldst thou vex thy soul with this
harsh air,

Thy bright-wound soul, once free to take its
way?

Nor for men's reverence hadst thou need to
wear

The holy flower of gray time-hallowed hair;
Nor were it fit that aught of thee grew old,
Fair lover all thy days of all things fair.

And hear we not thy words of molten gold
Singing? or is their light and heat acold
Whereat men warmed their spirits? Nay,
for all

These yet are with us, ours to hear and hold.

The lovely laughter, the clear tears, the call
Of love to love on ways where shadows fall,
Through doors of dim division and disguise,
And music made of doubts unmusical;

The love that caught strange light from death's
own eyes,*

And filled death's lips with fiery words and
sighs.

And half asleep let feed from veins of his
Her close red warm snake's mouth, Egyptian-
wise:

And that great night of love more strange than
this,†

When she that made the whole world's bale
and bliss

Made king of the whole world's desire a
slave,

And killed him in mid kingdom with a kiss;

Veiled loves that shifted shapes and shafts,
and gave,‡

Laughing, strange gifts to hands that durst
not crave,

Flowers double-blossomed, fruits of scent
and hue

Sweet as the bride-bed, stranger than the
grave;

* *La Morte Amoureuse.*

† *Une Nuit de Cléopâtre.* ‡ *Mademoiselle de Maupin.*

All joys and wonders of old lives and new
That ever in love's shine or shadow grew,
And all the grief whereof he dreams and
grieves,
And all sweet roots fed on his light and dew;

All these through thee our spirit of sense per-
ceives,
As threads in the unseen woof thy music
weaves,
Birds caught and snared that fill our ears
with thee,
Bay-blossoms in thy wreath of brow-bound
leaves.

Mixed with the masque of death's old comedy
Though thou too pass, have here our flowers,
that we
For all the flowers thou gav'st upon thee
shed,
And pass not crownless to Persephone.

Blue lotus-blooms and white and rosy-red
We wind with poppies for thy silent head,
And on this margin of the sundering sea
Leave thy sweet light to rise upon the dead.

SONNET.

(WITH A COPY OF "MADEMOISELLE DE
MAUPIN.")

THIS is the golden book of spirit and sense,
The holy writ of beauty; he that wrought
Made it with dreams and faultless words
and thought
That seeks and finds and loses in the dense
Dim air of life that beauty's excellence
Wherewith love makes one hour of life
distraught
And all hours after follow and find not aught.
Here is that height of all love's eminence
Where man may breathe but for a breathing-
space
And feel his soul burn as an altar-fire
To the unknown God of unachieved desire,
And from the middle mystery of the place
Watch lights that break, hear sounds as of
a quire,
But see not twice unveiled the veiled God's
face.

AGE AND SONG.

(TO BARRY CORNWALL.)

I.

IN vain men tell us time can alter
Old loves or make old memories falter,
That with the old year the old year's life
closes.
The old dew still falls on the old sweet flowers.
The old sun revives the new-fledged hours,
The old summer rears the new-born roses.

II.

Much more a Muse that bears upon her
Raiment and wreath and flower of honor,
Gathered long since and long since woven,
Fades not or falls as fall the vernal
Blossoms that bear no fruit eternal,
By summer or winter charred or cloven.

III.

No time casts down, no time upraises,
Such loves, such memories, and such praises,
As need no grace of sun or shower,
No saving screen from frost or thunder,
To tend and house around and under
The imperishable and fearless flower.

IV.

Old thanks, old thoughts, old aspirations,
Outlive men's lives and lives of nations,
Dead, but for one thing which survives—
The inalienable and unpriced treasure,
The old joy of power, the old pride of pleasure,
That lives in light above men's lives.

IN MEMORY OF BARRY CORNWALL.

(OCTOBER 4, 1874.)

I.

IN the garden of death, where the singers
whose names are deathless
One with another make music unheard of
men,
Where the dead sweet roses fade not of lips
long breathless,
And the fair eyes shine that shall weep not
or change again,
Who comes now crowned with the blossom
of snow-white years?

What music is this that the world of the dead
men hears?

II.

Beloved of men, whose words on our lips
were honey,
Whose name in our ears and our fathers'
ears was sweet,
Like summer gone forth of the land his songs
made sunny,
To the beautiful veiled bright world where
the glad ghosts meet,
Child, father, bridegroom and bride, and an-
guish and rest,
No soul shall pass of a singer than this more
blest.

III.

Blest for the years' sweet sake that were
filled and brightened,
As a forest with birds, with the fruit and
the flower of his song;
For the souls' sake blest that heard, and their
cares were lightened,
For the hearts' sake blest that have fostered
his name so long;
By the living and dead lips blest that have
loved his name,
And clothed with their praise and crowned
with their love for fame.

IV.

Ah, fair and fragrant his fame as flowers
that close not,
That shrink not by day for heat or for cold
by night,
As a thought in the heart shall increase when
the heart's self knows not,
Shall endure in our ears as a sound, in our
eyes as a light;
Shall wax with the years that wane and the
seasons' chime,
As a white rose thornless that grows in the
garden of time.

V.

The same year calls, and one goes hence with
another,
And men sit sad that were glad for their
sweet songs' sake;
The same year beckons, and elder with
younger brother
Takes mutely the cup from his hand that
we all shall take.*

* Sydney Dobell died August 22, 1874.

They pass ere the leaves be past or the snows
be come;
And the birds are loud, but the lips that out-
sang them dumb.

VI.

Time takes them home that we loved, fair
names and famous,
To the soft long sleep, to the broad sweet
bosom of death;
But the flower of their souls he shall take not
away to shame us,
Nor the lips lack song for ever that now
lack breath.
For with us shall the music and perfume
that die not dwell,
Though the dead to our dead bid welcome,
and we farewell.

EPICEDÉ.

(James Lorimer Graham died at Florence. April 30,
1876.)

LIFE may give for love to death
Little; what are life's gifts worth
To the dead wrapt round with earth?
Yet from lips of living breath
Sighs or words we are fain to give,
All that yet, while yet we live,
Life may give for love to death.

Dead so long before his day,
Passed out of the Italian sun
To the dark where all is done
Fallen upon the verge of May;
Here at life's and April's end
How should song salute my friend
Dead so long before his day?

Not a kindlier life or sweeter
Time, that lights and quenches men,
Now may quench or light again,
Mingling with the mystic metre
Woven of all men's lives with his
Not a clearer note than this,
Not a kindlier life or sweeter.

In this heavenliest part of earth
He that living loved the light,
Light and song, may rest aright,
One in death, if strange in birth,

With the deathless dead that make
Life the lovelier for their sake
In this heavenliest part of earth.

Light, and song, and sleep at last—
Struggling hands and suppliant knees
Get no goodlier gift than these.
Song that holds remembrance fast
Light that lightens death, attend
Round their graves who have to friend
Light, and song, and sleep at last.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

HE had no children, who for love of men,
Being God, endured of Gods such things
as thou,

Father; nor on his thunder-beaten brow
Fell such a woe as bows thine head again,
Twice bowed before, though godlike, in man's
ken,

And seen too high for any stroke to bow
Save this of some strange God's that bends
it now

The third time with such weight as bruised it
then.

Fain would grief speak, fain utter for love's
sake
Some word; but comfort who might bid thee
take?

What God in your own tongue shall talk
with thee,

Showing how all souls that look upon the
sun

Shall be for thee one spirit and thy son,
And thy soul's child the soul of man to be?

January 3, 1876.

INFERIAE.

SPRING, and the light and sound of things on
earth

Requickenings, all within our green sea's
girth;

A time of passage or a time of birth

Fourscore years since as this year, first and
last.

The sun is all about the world we see,
The breath and strength of very spring; and
we

Live, love, and feed on our own hearts; but
he
Whose heart fed mine has passed into the
past.

Past, all things born with sense and blood
and breath;

The flesh hears nought that now the spirit
saith.

If death be like as birth and birth as death,
The first was fair—more fair should be the
last.

Fourscore years since, and come but one
month more

The count were perfect of his moral score
Whose sail went seaward yesterday from shore
To cross the last of many an unsailed sea.

Light, love and labor up to life's last height,
These three were stars unsetting in his sight
Even as the sun is life and heat and light
And sets not nor is dark when dark are we.

The life, the spirit, and the work were one
That here—ah, who shall say, that here are
done

Nor I, that know not; father, not thy son,
For all the darkness of the night and sea.

A BIRTH-SONG.

For Olivia Frances Madox Rossetti, born September
20, 1875.)

OUT of the dark sweet sleep
Where no dreams laugh or weep
Borne through bright gates of birth
Into the dim sweet light

Where day still dreams of night

While heaven takes form on earth,
White rose of spirit and flesh, and lily of love,
What note of song have we
Fit for the birds and thee,
Fair nestling couched beneath the mother-
dove?

Nay, in some more divine
Small speechless song of thine
Some news too good for words
Heart-hushed and smiling, we
Might hope to have of thee,

The youngest of God's birds,
If thy sweet sense might mix itself with ours,
If ours might understand
The language of thy land,

Ere thine become the tongue of mortal
hours:

Ere thy lips learn too soon
Their soft first human tune,
Sweet, but less sweet than now,
And thy raised eyes to read
Glad and good things indeed,
But none so sweet as thou:

Ere thought lift up their flower-soft lids to see
What life and love on earth
Bring thee for gifts at birth,
But none so good as thine who hast given us
thee:

Now, ere thy sense forget
The heaven that fills it yet,
Now, sleeping or awake,
If thou couldst tell, or we
Ask and be heard of thee,
For love's undying sake,

From thy dumb lips divine and bright mute
speech

Such news might touch our ear
That then would burn to hear

Too high a message now for man's to reach.

Ere the gold hair of corn
Had withered wast thou born,
To make the good time glad;
The time that but last year
Fell colder than a tear
On hearts and hopes turned sad.

High hopes and hearts requickening in thy
dawn,

Even theirs whose life-springs, child,
Filled thine with life and smiled,

But then wept blood for half their own with
drawn.*

If death and birth be one,
And set with rise of sun,
And truth with dreams divine,
Some word might come with thee
From over the still sea

Deep hid in shade or shine,
Crossed by the crossing sails of death and birth,
Word of some sweet new thing
Fit for such lips to bring,
Some word of love, some afterthought of
earth.

If love be strong as death,
By what so natural breath
As thine could this be said?
By what so lovely way

Could love send word to say
He lives and is not dead?
Such word alone were fit for only thee,
If his and thine have met
Where spirits rise and set,
His whom we see not, thine whom scarce we
see:

His there new-born, as thou
New-born among us now;
His, here so fruitful-souled,
Now veiled and silent here,
Now dumb as thou last year,
A ghost of one year old:

It lights that change their sphere in changing
meet,
Some ray might his not give
To thine who wast to live,
And make thy present with his past life
sweet?

Let dreams that laugh or weep,
All glad and sad dreams, sleep;
Truth more than dreams is dear.
Let thoughts that change and fly,
Sweet thoughts and swift, go by;
More than all thought is here.

More than all hope can forge or memory
feign
The life that in our eyes,
Made out of love's life, lies,
And flower-like fed with love for sun and rain.

Twice royal in its root
The sweet small olive-shoot
Here set in sacred earth;
Twice dowered with glorious grace
From either heaven-born race
First blended in its birth;
Fair God or Genius of so fair an hour
For love of either name
Twice crowned, with love and fame,
Guard and be gracious to the fair-named
flower.

EX-VOTO.

WHEN their last hour shall rise
Pale on these mortal eyes,
Herself like one that dies,
And kiss me dying
The cold last kiss, and fold
Close round my limbs her cold
Soft shade as raiment rolled
And leave them lying.

* Oliver Madox Brown died November 5, 1874, in his
twentieth year.

If aught my soul would say
Might move to hear me pray
The birth-god of my day
That he might hearken,
This grace my heart should crave,
To find no landward grave
That worldly springs make brave,
World's winters darken,

Nor grow through gradual hours
The cold blind seed of flowers
Made by new beams and showers
From limbs that moulder,
Nor take my part with earth,
But find for death's new birth
A bed of larger girth,
More chaste and colder.

Not earth's for spring and fall,
Not earth's at heart, not all
Earth's making, though men call
Earth only mother,
Not hers at heart she bare
Me, but thy child, O fair
Sea, and thy brother's care,
The wind thy brother.
Yours was I born, and ye,
The sea-wind and the sea,
Made all my soul in me
A song forever,
A harp to string and smite
For love's sake of the bright
Wind and the sea's delight,
To fail them never:

Not while on this side death
I hear what either saith
And drink of either's breath
With heart's thanksgiving
That in my veins like wine
Some sharp salt blood of thine,
Some springtide pulse of brine
Yet leaps up living.

When thy salt lips wellnigh
Sucked in my mouth's last sigh,
Grudged I so much to die
This death as others?
Was it no ease to think
The chalice from whose brink
Fate gave me death to drink
Was thine,—my mother's?

Thee too, the all-fostering earth,
Fair as thy fairest birth,
More than thy worthiest worth,
We call, we know thee,

More sweet and just and dread
Than live men highest of head
Or even thy holiest dead
Laid low below thee.

The sunbeam on the sheaf,
The dewfall on the leaf,
All joy, all grace, all grief,
Are thine for giving;
Of thee our loves are born,
Our lives and loves, that mourn
And triumph; tares with corn,
Dead seed with living:

All good and ill things done
In eyeshot of the sun
t last in thee made one
Rest well contented;
All words of all man's breath
And works he doth or saith,
All wholly done to death,
None long lamented.

A slave to sons of thee,
Thou, seeming, yet art free;
But who shall make the sea
Serve even in seeming?
What plough shall bid it bear
Seed to the sun and the air,
Fruit for thy strong sons' fare,
Fresh wine's foam streaming?

What oldworld son of thine,
Made drunk with death as wine,
Hath drunk the bright sea's brine
With lips of laughter?
Thy blood they drink; but he
Who hath drunken of the sea
Once deeper than of thee
Shall drink not after.

Of thee thy sons of men
Drink deep, and thirst again;
For wine in feasts, and then
In fields for slaughter;
But thirst shall touch not him
Who hath felt with sense grown dim
Rise, covering lip and limb,
The wan sea's water.

All fire of thirst that aches
The salt sea cools and slakes
More than all springs or lakes,
Freshets or shallows;
Wells where no beam can burn
Through frondage of the fern
That hides from hart and hern
The haunt it hallows.

Peace with all graves on earth
 For death or sleep or birth
 Be alway, one in worth
 One with another!
 But when my time shall be,
 O mother, O my sea,
 Alive or dead, take me,
 Me too, my mother.

A BALLAD OF DREAMLAND.

I HID my heart in a nest of roses,
 Out of the sun's way, hidden apart;
 In a softer bed than the soft white snow's is,
 Under the roses I hid my heart.
 Why would it sleep not? why should it
 start,
 When never a leaf of the rose-tree stirred?
 What made sleep flutter his wings and part?
 Only the song of a secret bird.

Lie still, I said, for the wind's wing closes,
 And mild leaves muffle the keen sun's dart;
 Lie still, for the wind on the warm sea dozes,
 And the wind is unquieter yet than thou art.
 Does a thought in thee still as a thorn's
 wound smart?
 Does the flag still fret thee of hope deferred?
 What bids the lids of thy sleep dispart?
 Only the song of a secret bird.

The green land's name that a charm encloses,
 It never was writ in the traveller's chart,
 And sweet on its trees as the fruit that grows
 is,
 It never was sold in the merchant's mart.
 The swallows of dreams through its dim
 fields dart,
 And sleep's are the tunes in its tree-tops
 heard;
 No hound's note wakens the wildwood hart,
 Only the song of a secret bird.

ENVOL.

In the world of dreams I have chosen my part.
 To sleep for a season and hear no word
 Of true love's truth or of light love's art,
 Only the song of a secret bird.

CYRIL TOURNEUR.

A SEA that heaves with horror of the night.
 As maddened by the moon that hangs
 aghast

With strain and torment of the ravening
 blast,
 Haggard as hell, a bleak blind bloody light;
 No shore but one red reef of rock in sight,
 Whereon the waifs of many a wreck were
 cast
 And shattered in the fierce nights over-
 past
 Wherein more souls toward hell than heaven
 took flight;
 And 'twixt the shark-toothed rocks and
 swallowing shoals
 A cry as out of hell from all these souls
 Sent through the sheer gorge of the
 slaughtering sea,
 Whose thousand throats, full-fed with life by
 death,
 Fill the black air with foam and furious
 breath;
 And over all these one star—Chastity.

A BALLAD OF FRANCOIS VILLON,

PRINCE OF ALL BALLAD-MAKERS.

BIRD of the bitter bright gray golden morn
 Scarce risen upon the dusk of dolorous
 years,
 First of us all and sweetest singer born
 Whose far shrill note the world of new men
 hears
 Cleave the cold shuddering shade as
 twilight clears;
 When song new-born put off the old world's
 attire
 And felt its tune on her changed lips expire.
 Writ foremost on the roll of them that came
 Fresh girt for service of the latter lyre,
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
 name!

Alas the joy, the sorrow and the scorn,
 That clothed thy life with hopes and sins
 and fears,
 And gave thee stones for bread and tares for
 corn
 And plume-plucked jail-birds for thy
 starveling peers
 Till death clapt close their flight with shame-
 ful shears;
 Till shifts came short and loves were hard to
 hire,
 When lilt of song nor twitch of twangling
 wire
 Could buy thee bread or kisses; when light
 fame

Spurned like a ball and haled through brake
and briar,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
name !

Poor splendid wings so frayed and soiled and
torn !

Poor kind wild eyes so dashed with light
quick tears !

Poor perfect voice, most blithe when most
forlorn,

That rings athwart the sea whence no man
steers

Like joy-bells crossed with death-bells in
our ears !

What far delight has cooled the fierce desire
That like some ravenous bird was strong to
tire

On that frail flesh and soul consumed with
flame,

But left more sweet than roses to respire,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
name ?

ENVOI.

Prince of sweet songs made out of tears and
fire,

A harlot was thy nurse, a God thy sire ;
Shame soiled thy song, and song assoiled
thy shame.

But from thy feet now death has washed the
mire,

Love reads our first at head of all our quire,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
name.

PASTICHE.

Now the days are all gone over
Of our singing, love by lover.
Days of summer-colored seas
Blown adrift, through beam and breeze.

Now the nights are all past over
Of our dreaming, dreams that hover
In a mist of fair false things,
Nights afloat on wide wan wings.

Now the loves with faith for mother,
Now the fears which hope for brother,
Scarce are with us as strange words,
Notes from songs of last year's birds.

Now all good that comes or goes is
As the smell of last year's roses,
As the radiance in our eyes
Shot from summer's ere he dies.

Now the morning faintlier risen
Seems no God come forth of prison,
But a bird of plume-plucked wing,
Pale with thoughts of evening.

Now hath hope, outraced in running
Given the touch up of his cunning
And the palm he thought to wear
Even to his own strong child—despair,

BEFORE SUNSET.

In the lower lands of day
On the hither side of night,
There is nothing that will stay,
There are all things soft to sight;
Lighted shade and shadowy light
In the wayside and the way,
Hours the sun has spared to smite,
Flowers the rain has left to play.

Shall these hours run down and say
No good thing of thee and me ?
Time that made us and will slay
Laughs at love in me and thee ;
But if here the flowers may see
One whole hour of amorous breath,
Time shall die, and love shall be
Lord as time was over death.

SONG.

LOVE laid his sleepless head
On a thorny rosy bed ;
And his eyes with tears were red,
And pale his lips as the dead.

And fear and sorrow and scorn
Kept watch by his head forlorn.
Till the night was overworn
And the world was merry with morn.

And Joy came up with the day
And kissed Love's lips as he lay,
And the watchers ghostly and gray
Sped from his pillow away.

And his eyes as the dawn grew bright,
And his lips waxed ruddy as light:
Sorrow may reign for a night,
But day shall bring back delight.

A VISION OF SPRING IN WINTER.

I.

O TENDER time that love thinks long to see,
 Sweet foot of spring that with her footfall
 sows
 Late snowlike flowery leavings of the
 snows,
 Be not too long irresolute to be;
 O mother-month, where have they hidden
 thee?
 Out of the pale time of the flowerless rose
 I reach my heart out toward the springtime
 lands,
 I stretch my spirit forth to the fair hours,
 The purplest of the prime;
 I lean my soul down over them, with hands
 Made wide to take the ghostly growths of
 flowers;
 I send my love back to the lovely time.

II.

Where has the greenwood hid thy gracious
 head?
 Veiled with what visions while the gray
 world grieves,
 Or muffled with what shadows of green
 leaves,
 What warm intangible green shadows spread
 To sweeten the sweet twilight for thy bed?
 What sleep enchants thee? what delight
 deceives?
 Where the deep dreamlike dew before the
 dawn
 Feels not the fingers of the sunlight yet
 Its silver web unweave,
 Thy footless ghost on some unfooted lawn
 Whose air the unrisen sunbeams fear to
 fret
 Lives a ghost's life of daylong dawn
 and eve.

III.

Sunrise it sees not, neither set of star,
 Large nightfall, nor imperial plenilune,
 Nor strong sweet shape of the full-breasted
 noon;
 But where the silver-sandalled shadows are,
 Too soft for arrows of the sun to mar,
 Moves with the mild gait of an ungrown
 moon:
 Hard overhead the half-lit crescent swims,
 The tender-colored night draws hardly
 breath,

The light is listening;
 They watch the dawn of slender-shapen limbs,
 Virginal, born again of doubtful death,
 Chill foster-father of the weanling
 spring.

IV.

As sweet desire of day before the day,
 As dreams of love before the true love born
 From the outer edge of winter overborn
 The ghost arisen of May before the May
 Takes through dim air her unawakened way,
 The gracious ghost of morning risen ere
 morn.
 With little unblown breasts and child-eyed
 looks
 Following, the very maid, the girl-child
 spring,
 Lifts windward her bright brows,
 Dips her light feet in warm and moving brooks,
 And kindles with her own mouth's coloring
 The fearful firstlings of the plumeless
 boughs.

V.

I seek thee sleeping, and awhile I see,
 Fair face that art not, how thy maiden
 breath
 Shall put at last the deadly days to death
 And fill the fields and fire the woods with thee
 And seaward hollows where my feet would be
 When heaven shall hear the word that
 April saith
 To change the cold heart of the weary time,
 To stir and soften all the time to tears,
 Tears joyfuller than mirth;
 As even to May's clear height the young days
 climb
 With feet not swifter than those fair first
 years
 Whose flowers revive not with thy
 flowers on earth.

VI.

I would not bid thee, though I might, give
 back
 One good thing youth has given and borne
 away;
 I crave not any comfort of the day
 That is not, nor on time's retrodden track
 Would turn to meet the white-robed hours
 or black
 That long since left me on their mortal way;
 Nor light nor love that has been, nor the
 breath

That comes with the morning from the sun
to be
And sets light hope on fire ;
No fruit, no flower thought once too fair for
death,
No flower nor hour once fallen from life's
green tree,
No leaf once plucked or once fulfilled
desire.

VII.

The morning song beneath the stars that fled
With twilight through the moonless moun-
tain air,
While youth with burning lips and wreath-
less hair
Sang toward the sun that was to crown his
head,
Rising ; the hopes that triumphed and fell
dead,
The sweet swift eyes and songs of hours
that were ;
These may'st thou not give back forever ;
these,
As at the sea's heart all her wrecks lie
waste,
Lie deeper than the sea ;
But flowers thou may'st, and winds, and
hours of ease,
And all its April to the world thou may'st
Give back, and half my April back to
me.

CHORIAMBICS.

LOVE, what ailed thee to leave life that was
made lovely, we thought, with love ?
What sweet visions of sleep lured thee away,
down from the light above ?

What strange faces of dreams, voices that
called, hands that were raised to wave,
Lured or led thee, alas, out of the sun, down
to the sunless grave ?

Ah, thy luminous eyes ! once was their light
fed with the fire of day ;
Now their shadowy lids cover them close,
hush them and hide away.

Ah, thy snow-colored hands ! once were they
chains, mighty to bind me fast ;
Now no blood in them burns, mindless of
love, senseless of passion past.

Ah, thy beautiful hair ! so was it once braided
for me, for me ;
Now for death is it crowned, only for death,
lover and lord of thee.

Sweet, the kisses of death set on thy lips,
colder are they than mine ;
Colder surely than past kisses that love
poured for thy lips as wine.

Lov'st thou death ? is his face fairer than
love's, brighter to look upon ?
Seest thou light in his eyes, light by which
love's pales and is overshadowed ?

Lo, the roses of death, gray as the dust, chiller
of leaf than snow !
Why let fall from thy hand love's that were
thine, roses that loved thee so ?

Large red lilies of love, sceptral and tall,
lovely for eyes to see ;
Thornless blossom of love, full of the sun,
fruits that were reared for thee.

Now death's poppies alone circle thy hair,
girdle thy breasts as white ;
Bloodless blossoms of death, leaves that have
sprung never against the light.

Nay then, sleep if thou wilt ; love is content ;
what should he do to weep ?
Sweet was love to thee once ; now in thine
eyes sweeter than love is sleep.

AT PARTING.

FOR a day and a night Love sang to us,
played with us,
Folded us round from the dark and the
light ;
And our hearts were fulfilled of the music he
made with us,
Made with our hearts and our lips while he
stayed with us,
Stayed in mid passage his pinions from
flight

For a day and a night.

From his foes that kept watch with his wings
had he hidden us,
Covered us close from the eyes that would
smite,
From the feet that had tracked and the
tongues that had chidden us

Sheltering in shade of the myrtles forbidden
 us
 Spirit and flesh growing one with delight
 For a day and a night.

But his wings will not rest and his feet will
 not stay for us:
 Morning is here in the joy of its might;
 With his breath has he sweetened a night
 and a day for us;
 Now let him pass, and the myrtles make way
 for us;
 Love can but last in us here at his height
 For a day and a night.

A SONG IN SEASON.

I.

THOU whose beauty
 Knows no duty
 Due to love that moves thee never;
 Thou whose mercies
 Are men's curses,
 And thy smile a scourge forever;

II.

Thou that givest
 Death and livest
 On the death of thy sweet giving;
 Thou that sparest
 Not nor carest
 Though thy scorn leave no love living;

III.

Thou whose rootless
 Flower is fruitless
 As the pride its heart encloses,
 But thine eyes are
 As May skies are,
 And thy words like spoken roses;

IV.

Thou whose grace is
 In men's faces
 Fierce and wayward as thy will is;
 Thou whose peerless
 Eyes are tearless,
 And thy thoughts as cold sweet lilies;

V.

Thou that takest
 Hearts and makest
 Wrecks of loves to strew behind thee,

Whom the swallow
 Sure should follow,
 Finding summer where we find thee;

VI.

Thou that wakest
 Hearts and breakest,
 And thy broken hearts forgive thee,
 That wilt make no
 Pause and take no
 Gift that love for love might give thee.

VII.

Thou that bindest
 Eyes and blindest,
 Serving worst who served thee longest;
 Thou that speakest,
 And the weakest
 Heart is his that was the strongest;

VIII.

Take in season
 Thought with reason;
 Think what gifts are ours for giving;
 Hear what beauty
 Owes of duty
 To the love that keeps it living.

IX.

Dust that covers
 Long dead lovers
 Song blows off with breath that brightens;
 At its flashes
 Their white ashes
 Burst in bloom that lives and lightens.

X.

Had they bent not
 Head or lent not
 Ear to love and amorous duties,
 Song had never
 Saved forever,
 Love, the least of all their beauties.

XI.

All the golden
 Names of olden
 Women yet by men's love cherished,
 All our dearest
 Thoughts hold nearest,
 Had they loved not, all had perished.

XII.

If no fruit is
Of thy beauties,
Tell me yet, since none may win them,
What and wherefore
Love should care for
Of all good things hidden in them?

XIII.

Pain for profit
Comes but of it,
If the lips that lure their lover's
Hold no treasure
Past the measure
Of the lightest hour that hovers.

XIV.

If they give not
Or forgive not
Gifts or thefts for grace or guerdon,
Love that misses
Fruit of kisses
Long will bear no thankless burden.

XV.

If they care not
Though love were not,
If no breath of his burn through them,
Joy must borrow
Song from sorrow,
Fear teach hope the way to woo them.

XVI.

Grief has measures
Soft as pleasure's,
Fear has moods that hope lies deep in,
Songs to sing him,
Dreams to bring him,
And a red-rose bed to sleep in.

XVII.

Hope with fearless
Looks and tearless
Lies and laughs too near the thunder;
Fear hath sweeter
Speech and meeter
For heart's love to hide him under.

XVIII.

Joy by daytime
Fills his playtime
Full of songs loud mirth takes pride in;

Night and morrow
Weave round sorrow
Thoughts as soft as sleep to hide

XIX.

Graceless faces,
Loveless graces,
Are but motes in light that quicken,
Sands that run down
Ere the sundown,
Rose-leaves dead ere autumn sicken.

XX.

Fair and fruitless
Charms are bootless
Spells to ward off age's peril;
Lips that give not
Love shall live not,
Eyes that meet not eyes are sterile.

XXI.

But the beauty
Bound in duty
Fast to love that falls off never
Love shall cherish
Lest it perish,
And its roots bears fruit forever.

TWO LEADERS.

βάτε δόμον, μεγάλοι φιλοτιμοί
Νυκτός παίδες ἀπαιδες, ὑπ' εὐφροσύνην πομπῇ.

I.

O GREAT and wise, clear-souled and high of
heart,
One the last flower of Catholic love, that
grows
Amid bare thorns their only thornless rose,
From the fierce juggling of the priests' loud
mart
Yet alien, yet unspotted and apart
From the blind hard foul rout whose sham-
less shows
Mock the sweet heaven whose secret no
man knows
With prayers and curses and the soothsayer's
art;
One like a storm-god of the northern foam
Strong, wrought of rock that breasts and
breaks the sea
And thunders back its thunder, rhyme
for rhyme
Answering, as though to outroar the tides
of time

And bid the world's wave back—what
song should be
Theirs that with praise would bring and sing
you home ?

II.

With all our hearts we praise you whom ye
hate,
High souls that hate us; for our hopes are
higher,
And higher than yours the goal of our de-
sire,
Though high your ends be as your hearts are
great.
Your world of Gods and kings, of shrine and
state,
Was of the night when hope and fear stood
nigher,
Wherein men walked by light of stars and
fire
Till man by day stood equal with his fate.
Honor not hate we give you, love not fear,
Last prophets of past kind, who fill the
dome
Of great dead Gods with wrath and wail, nor
hear
Time's word and man's: 'Go honored
hence, go home,
Night's childless children; here your hour is
done;
Pass with the stars, and leave us with the
sun.'

VICTOR HUGO IN 1877.

'Dazzle mine eyes, or do I see three suns?'

ABOVE the spring-tide sundawn of the year,
A sunlike star, not born of day or night,
Filled the fair heaven of spring with
heavenlier light,
Made of all ages orb'd in one sole sphere
Whose light was as a Titan's smile or tear;
Then rose a ray more flowerlike, starry
white,
Like a child's eye grown lovelier with
delight,
Sweet as a child's heart-lightening laugh to
hear;
And last a fire from heaven, a fiery rain
As of God's wrath on the unclean cities,
fell
And lit the shuddering shades of half-
seen hell
That shrank before it and were cloven in
twain;

A beacon fired by lightning, whence all
time
Sees red the bare black ruins of a crime.

CHILD'S SONG.

WHAT is gold worth, say,
Worth for work or play,
Worth to keep or pay,
Hide or throw away,
Hope about or fear?
What is love worth, pray?
Worth a tear?

Golden on the mould
Lie the dead leaves rolled
Of the wet woods old,
Yellow leaves and cold,
Woods without a dove;
Gold is worth but gold;
Love's worth love.

TRIADS.

I.

I.

THE word of the sun to the sky,
The word of the wind to the sea,
The word of the moon to the night,
What may it be?

II.

The sense to the flower of the fly,
The sense of the bird to the tree,
The sense to the cloud of the light,
Who can tell me?

III.

The song of the fields to the kye,
The song of the lime to the bee,
The song of the depth to the height,
Who knows all three?

II.

I.

The message of April to May
That May sends on into June
And June give out to July
For birthday boon;

II.

The delight of the dawn in the day,
 The delight of the day in the noon,
 The delight of a song in a sigh
 That breaks the tune ;

III.

The secret of passing away,
 The cost of the change of the moon,
 None knows it with ear or with eye,
 But all will soon.

III.

I.

The live wave's love for the shore,
 The shore's for the wave as it dies,

The love of the thunder-fire
 That sears the skies,

II.

We shall know not though life wax hoar.
 Till all life, spent into sighs,
 Burn out as consumed with desire
 Of death's strange eyes ;

III.

Till the secret be secret no more
 In the light of one hour as it flies,
 Be the hour as of suns that expire
 Or suns that rise.

FOUR SONGS OF FOUR SEASONS.

I. WINTER IN NORTHUMBERLAND.

I.

Outside the garden
 The wet skies harden ;
 The gates are barred on
 The summer side :
 Shut out the flower-time,
 'Sunbeam and shower-time ;
 Make way for our time,'
 Wild winds have cried.
 Green once and cheery,
 The woods, worn weary,
 Sigh as the dreary
 Weak sun goes home :
 A great wind grapples
 The wave, and dapples
The dead green floor of the sea with foam.

II.

Through fell and moorland,
 And salt-sea foreland,
 Our noisy norland
 Resounds and rings ;
 Waste waves thereunder
 Are blown in sunder,
 And winds make thunder
 With cloudwide wings ;
 Sea-drift makes dimmer
 The beacon's glimmer ;
 Nor sail nor swimmer
 Can try the tides ;
 And snowdrifts thicken
 Where, when leaves quicken,
Under the heather the sundew hides.

III.

Green land and red land,
 Moorside and headland,
 Are white as dead land,
 Are all as one ;
Nor honied heather

Nor bells to gather,
 Fair with fair weather
 And faithful sun :
 Fierce frost has eaten
 All flowers that sweeten
 The fells rain-beaten ;
 And winds their foes
 Have made the snow's bed
 Down in the rose-bed ;
Deep in the snow's bed bury the rose.

IV.

Bury her deeper
 Than any sleeper ;
 Sweet dreams will keep her
 All day, all night ;
 Though sleep benumb her
 And time o'ercome her,
 She dreams of summer,
 And takes delight,
 Dreaming and sleeping
 In love's good keeping,
 While rain is weeping
 And no leaves cling ;
 Winds will come bringing her
 Comfort, and singing her
Stories and songs and good news of the spring.

V.

Draw the white curtain
 Close, and be certain
 She takes no hurt in
 Her soft low bed ;
 She feels no colder,
 And grows not older,
 Though snows enfold her
 From foot to head ;
 She turns not chilly
 Like weed and lily
 In marsh or hilly
High watershed,

Or green soft island
In lakes of highland ;
She sleeps awhile, and she is not dead.

VI.

For all the hours,
Come sun, come showers,
Are friends of flowers,
And fairies all ;
When frost entrapped her,
They came and lapped her
In leaves, and wrapped her
With shroud and pall ;
In red leaves wound her,
With dead leaves bound her
Dead brows, and round her
A death-knell rang ;
Rang the death-bell for her,
Sang 'is it well for her,
Well, is it well with you, rose ?' they sang.

VII.

O what and where is
The rose now, fairies,
So shrill the air is,
So wild the sky ?
Poor last of roses,
Her worst of woes is
The noise she knows is
The winter's cry ;
His hunting hollo
Has scared the swallow ;
Fain would she follow
And fain would fly ;
But wind unsettles
Her poor last petals ;
Had she but wings, and she would not die.

VIII.

Come, as you love her,
Come close and cover
Her white face over,
And forth again
Ere sunset glances
On foam that dances,
Through lowering lances
Of bright white rain ;
And make your playtime
Of winter's daytime
As if the Maytime
Were here to sing ;
As if the snowballs

Were soft like blowballs,
Blown in a mist from the stalk in the spring.

IX.

Each reed that grows in
Our stream is frozen,
The fields it flows in
Are hard and black ;
The water-fairy
Waits wise and wary
Till time shall vary
And thaws come back.
'O sister, water,'
The wind besought her,
'O twin-born daughter
Of spring with me,
Stay with me, play with me,
Take the warm way with me.
Straight for the summer and oversea.'

X.

But winds will vary,
And wise and wary
The patient fairy
Of water waits ;
All shrunk and wizen,
In iron prison,
Till spring re-risen
Unbar the gates ;
Till, as with clamor
Of axe and hammer,
Chained streams that stammer
And struggle in straits
Burst bonds that shiver,
And thaws deliver
The roaring river in stormy spates.

XI.

In fierce March weather
White waves break tether,
And whirled together
At either hand,
Like weeds uplifted,
The tree-trunks rifted
In spars are drifted,
Like foam or sand,
Past swamp and sallow,
And reed-beds callow,
Through pool and shallow,
To wind and lee,
Till, no more tongue-tied,
Full flood and young tide
Roar down the rapids and storm the sea.

XII.

As men's cheeks faded
 On shores invaded,
 When shorewards waded
 The lords of fight ;
 When churl and craven
 Saw hard on haven
 The wide-winged raven
 At mainmast height ;
 When monks affrighted
 To windward sighted
 The birds full-flighted
 Of swift sea-kings ;
 So earth turns paler
 When Storm the sailor
 Steers in with a roar in the race of his wings.

XIII.

O strong sea-sailor,
 Whose cheeks turn paler
 For wind or hail or
 For fear of thee ?
 O far sea-farer,
 O thunder-bearer,
 Thy songs are rarer
 Than soft songs be.
 O fleet-foot stranger,
 O north-sea ranger
 Through days of danger
 And ways of fear,
 Blow thy horn here for us,
 Blow the sky clear for us,
 Send us the song of the sea to hear.

XIV.

Roll the strong stream of it
 Up, till the scream of it
 Wake from a dream of it
 Children that sleep,
 Seamen that fare for them
 Forth, with a prayer for them ;
 Shall not God care for them,

Angels not keep ?

Spare not the surges

Thy stormy scourges ;

Spare us the dirges

Of wives that weep.

Turn back the waves for us :

Dig no fresh graves for us,

Wind, in the manifold gulfs of the deep.

XV.

O stout north-easter,

Sea-king, land-waster,

For all thine, haste, or

Thy stormy skill,

Yet hast thou never,

For all endeavor,

Strength to dis sever

Or strength to spill,

Save of his giving

Who gave our living,

Whose hands are weaving

What ours fulfill ;

Whose feet tread under

The storms and thunder ;

Who made our wonder to work his will.

XVI.

His years and hours,

His world's blind powers,

His stars and flowers,

His nights and days,

Sea-tide and river,

And waves that shiver,

Praise God, the giver

Of tongues to praise.

Winds in their blowing,

And fruits in growing ;

Time in its going,

While time shall be ;

In death and living,

With one thanksgiving,

Praise him whose hand is the strength of the sea.

2. SPRING IN TUSCANY.

ROSE-RED lilies that bloom on the banner ;
 Rose-cheeked gardens that revel in spring ;
 Rose-mouthed acacias that laugh as they
 climb,

Like plumes for a queen's hand fashioned to
 fan her
 With wind more soft than a wild dove's wing,
 What do they sing in the spring of their time ?

If this be the rose that the world hears singing,
Soft in the soft night, loud in the day,
Songs for the fire-flies to dance as they
hear ;

If that be the song of the nightingale, spring-
ing
Forth in the form of a rose in May,
What do they say of the way of the year ?

What of the way of the world gone Maying,
What of the work of the buds in the bowers,
What of the will of the wind on the wall,
Fluttering the wall-flowers, sighing and playing,
Shrinking again as a bird that cowers,
Thinking of hours when the flowers have
to fall ?

Out of the throats of the loud birds shower-
ing,
Out of the folds where the flag-lilies leap,
Out of the mouths of the roses stirred,
Out of the herbs on the walls reflowering,
Out of the heights where the sheer snows
sleep,
Out of the deep and the steep, one word.

One from the lips of the lily-flames leaping,
The glad red lilies that burn in our sight,
The great live lilies for standard and
crown ;

One from the steeps where the pines stand
sleeping,
One from the deep land, one from the height,
One from the light and the might of the
town.

The lowlands laugh with delight of the high-
lands,
Whence May winds feed them with balm
and breath

From hills that beheld in the years behind
A shape as of one from the blest souls' islands,
Made fair by a soul too fair for death,
With eyes on the light that should smite
them blind.

Vallombrosa remotely remembers,
Perchance, what still to us seems so near,
That time not darkens it, change not mars,
The foot that she knew when her leaves were
September's,
The face lift up to the star-blind seer,
That saw from his prison arisen his stars.

And Pisa broods on her dead, not mourning,
For love of her loveliness given them in fee ;
And Prato gleams with the glad monk's
gift
Whose hand was there as the hand of morning ;
And Siena, set in the sand's red sea,
Lifts loftier her head than the red sand's
drift.

And far to the fair south-westward lightens,
Girdled and sandalled and plumed with
flowers,
At sunset over the love-lit lands,
The hill-side's crown where the wild hill
brightens,
Saint Fina's town of the Beautiful Towers,
Hailing the sun with a hundred hands.

Land of us all that have loved thee dearest,
Mother of men that were lords of man,
Whose name in the world's heart works as
a spell,

My last song's light, and the star of mine earli-
est,
As we turn from thee, sweet, who wast ours
for a span,
Fare well we may not who say farewell.

3. SUMMER IN AUVERGNE.

THE sundawn fills the land
Full as a feaster's hand
Fills full with bloom of bland
Bright wine his cup ;
Flows full to flood that fills
From the arch of air it thrills
Those rust-red iron hills
With morning up ;

Dawn, as a panther's springs,
With fierce and fire-fledged wings
Leaps on the land that rings
From her bright feet
Thro all its lava-black
Cones that cast answer back
And cliffs of footless track
Where thunders meet.

The light speaks wide and loud
 From deeps blown clean of cloud
 As tho' days' heart were proud
 And heaven's were glad;
 The towers brown-striped and grey
 Take fire from heaven of day
 As tho' the prayers they pray
 Their answers had.

Higher in these high first hours
 Wax all the keen church towers,
 And higher all hearts of ours
 Than the old hills' crown,
 Higher than the pillared height
 Of that strange cliff-side bright
 With basalt towers whose might
 Strong time bows down.

'Shut out the flower time
 Half sun's half shower time,
 Make way for our time.'

Wild winds have cried.
 What is love worth? nay,
 Tell me, dear.

And the old fierce ruin there
 Of the old wild princes' lair
 Whose blood in mine hath share
 Gapes gaunt and great
 Toward heaven that long ago
 Watched all the wan land's woe
 Whereon the wind would blow
 Of their bleak hate.

Dead are those deeds; but yet
 Their memory seems to fret
 Lands that might else forget
 That old world's brand;
 Dead all their sins and days;
 Yet in this red climes rays
 Some fiery memory stays
 That scars their land.

4. AUTUMN IN CORNWALL.

THE year lies fallen and faded
 On cliffs by clouds invaded,
 With tongues of storms upbraided,
 With wrath of waves bedinned;
 And inland, wild with warning,
 As in deaf ears or scorning,
 The clarion even and morning
 Rings of the south-west wind.

The wild bents wane and wither
 In blasts whose breath bows hither
 Their grey-grown heads and thither,
 Unblest of rain or sun;
 The pale fierce heavens are crowded
 Wit shapes like dreams beclouded,
 As though the old year enshrouded
 Lay, long ere life were done.

Full-charged with old-world wonders,
 From dusk Tintagel thunders
 A note that smites and sunders
 The hard froze-fields of air;
 A trumpet stormier-sounded
 Than once from lists rebounded
 When strong men sense-confounded
 Fell thick in tourney there.

From scarce a duskier dwelling
 Such notes of wail rose welling
 Thro' the outer darkness, telling
 In the awful singer's ears
 What souls the darkness covers,
 What love-lost souls of lovers,
 Whose cry still hangs and hovers
 In each man's born that hears.

For there by Hector's brother
 And yet some thousand other
 He that had grief to mother
 Passed pale from Dante's sight;
 With one fast linked as fearless,
 Perchance, there only tearless;
 Isult and Tristram, peerless
 And perfect queen and knight.

A shrill-winged sound comes flying
 North, as of wild souls crying
 The cry of things undying,
 That know what life must be;
 Or as the old year's heart, stricken
 Too sore for hope to quicken
 By thoughts like thorns that thicken,
 Broke, breaking with the sea.

THE WHITE CZAR.

[In an English magazine of 1877 there appeared a version of some insolent lines addressed by 'A Russian Poet to the Empress of India.' To these the first of the two following sonnets was designed to serve by way of counterblast. The writer will scarcely be suspected of royalism or imperialism; but it seemed to him that an insult levelled by Muscovite lips at the ruler of England might perhaps be less unfitly than unofficially resented by an Englishman who was also a republican.]

GEHAZI by the hue that chills thy cheek
 And Pilate by the hue that sears thine hand
 Whence all earth's waters cannot wash the
 brand
 That signs thy soul a manslayer's though thou
 speak
 All Christ, with lips most murderous and most
 meek—
 Thou set thy foot where England's used to
 stand!
 Thou reach thy rod forth over Indian land!
 Slave of the slaves that call thee lord, and
 weak
 As their foul tongues who praise thee! son of
 them
 Whose presence put the snows and stars to
 shame
 In centuries dead and damned that reek be-
 low
 Curse-consecrated, crowned with crime and

flame,
 To them that bare thee like them shalt
 thou go
 Forth of man's life—a leper white as snow.

II.

Call for clear water, wash thine hands, be
 clean,
 Cry, *What is truth?* O Pilate; thou shalt
 know
 Haply too soon, and gnash thy teeth for woe
 Ere the outer darkness take thee round unseen
 That hides the red ghosts of thy race obscene
 Bound nine times round with hell's most dol-
 orous flow
 And in its pools thy crownless head lie low
 By his of Spain who dared an English queen
 With half a world to hearten him for fight,
 Till the wind gave his warriors and their might
 To shipwreck and the corpse-encumbered sea;
 But thou, take heed, ere yet thy lips wax white,
 Lest as it was with Philip so it be,
 O white of name and red of hand, with thee.

RIZPAH.

How many sons, how many generations,
 For how long years hast thou bewept, and
 known

Nor end of torment nor surcease of moan,
 Rachel or Rizpah, wofullest of nations,
 Crowned with the crowning sign of desolations,

And couldst not even scare off with hand or groan Those carrion birds devouring bone by bone The children of thy thousand tribulations ? Thou wast our warrior once ; thy sons long dead	Against a foe less foul than this made head, Poland, in years that sound and shine afar ; Ere the east beheld in thy bright sword-blade's stead The rotten corpse-light of the Russian star That lights towards hell his bondslaves and their Czar.
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TO LOUIS KOSSUTH.

LIGHT of our fathers' eyes, and in our own Star of the unsetting sunset ! for thy name, That on the front of noon was as a flame In the great year nigh twenty years ago When all the heavens of Europe shook and shone With stormy wind and lightning, keeps its fame And bears its witness all day through the same ;	Not for past days and great deeds past alone, Kossuth, we praise thee as our Landor praised, But that now too we know thy voice up- raised, Thy voice, the trumpet of the truth of God, Thine hand, the thunder-bearer's, raised to smite As with heaven's lightning for a sword and rod Men's heads abased before the Muscovite.
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TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FRENCH OF VILLON.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE FAIR ARMOURESS.

I.

MESEMEMETH I heard cry and groan
 That sweet who was the armourer's maid ;
 For her young years she made sore moan,
 And right upon this wise she said ;
 " Ah fierce old age with foul bald head,
 To spoil fair things thou art over fain ;
 Who holdeth me ? who ? would God I were
 dead !
 Would God I were well dead and slain !

2.

" Lo, thou hast broken the sweet yoke
 That my high beauty held above
 All priests and clerks and merchant-folk ;
 There was not one but for my love
 Would give me gold and gold enough,
 Though sorrow his very heart had riven,
 To win from me such wage thereof
 As now no thief would take if given.

3.

"I was right chary of the same,
 God wot it was my great folly,
 For love of one sly knave of them,
 Good store of that same sweet had he ;
 For all my subtle wiles, perdie,
 God wot I loved him well enow ;
 Right evilly he handled me,
 But he loved well my gold, I trow.

4.

"Though I gat bruises green and black,
 I loved him never the less a jot ;
 Though he bound burdens on my back,
 If he said 'Kiss me,' and heed it not,
 Right little pain I felt, God wot,
 When that foul thief's mouth, found so sweet,
 Kissed me—Much good thereof I got !
 I keep the sin and the shame of it.

5.

"And he died thirly year agone.
 I am old now, no sweet thing to see ;
 By God, though, when I think thereon,
 And of that good glad time, woe's me,
 And stare upon my changed body
 Stark naked, that has been so sweet,
 Lean, wizen, like a small dry tree,
 I am nigh mad with the pain of it.

6.

"Where is my faultless forehead's white
 The lifted eyebrows, soft gold hair
 Eyes wide apart and keen of sight,
 With subtle skill in the amorous air ;
 The straight nose, great nor small, but fair.
 The small carved ears of shapeliest growth,
 Chin dimpling, color good to wear,
 And sweet red splendid kissing mouth ?

7.

"The shapely slender shoulders small,
 Long arms, hands wrought in glorious wise,
 Round little breasts, the hips withal
 High, full of flesh, not scant of size,
 Fit for all amorous masteries ;
 * * * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * * ?

8.

"A writhled forehead, hair gone grey,
 Fallen eyebrows, eyes gone blind and red,
 Their laughs and looks all fled away,
 Yea, all that smote men's hearts are fled ;
 The bowed nose, fallen from goodlihead ;
 Foul flapping ears like water-flags ;
 Peaked chin, and cheeks all waste and dead,
 And lips that are two skinny rags :

9.

"Thus endeth all the beauty of us.
 The arms made short, the hands made lean,
 The shoulders bowed and ruinous,
 The breasts, alack ! all fallen in ;
 The flanks too, like the breasts, grown thin
 * * * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * *

10.

"So we make moan for the old sweet days,
 Poor old light women, two or three
 Squatting about the straw-fire's blaze,
 The bosom crushed against the knee,
 Like fagots on a heap we be,
 Round fires soon lit, soon quenched and done ;
 And we were once so sweet, even we !
 Thus fareth many and many an one."

A DOUBLE BALLAD OF GOOD COUNSEL.

Now take your fill of love and glee,
 And after balls and banquets hie ;
 In the end ye'll get no good for fee,
 But just heads broken by and by ;
 Light loves make beasts of men that sigh ;
 They changed the faith of Solomon,
 And left not Samson lights to spy ;
 Good luck has he that deals with none !

Sweet Orpheus, lord of minstrelsy,
 For this with flute and pipe came nigh
 The danger of the dog's heads three
 That ravening at hell's door doth lie ;
 Fain was Narcissus, fair and shay,
 For love's love lightly lost and won,
 In a deep well to drown and lie ;
 Good luck has he that deals with none !

Sardana, flower of chivalry,
 Who conquered Crete with horn and cry,
 For this was fain a maid to be
 And learn with girls the thread to ply ;
 King David, wise in prophecy,
 Forgot the fear of God for one
 Seen washing either shapely thigh ;
 Good luck has he that deals with none !

For this did Amnon, craftily
 Feigning to eat of cakes of rye,
 Deflower his sister fair to see,
 Which was foul incest ; and hereby
 Was Herod moved, it is no lie,
 To lop the head of Baptist John
 For dance and jig and psaltery ;
 Good luck has he that deals with none !

Next of myself I tell, poor me,
 How thrashed like clothes at wash was I
 Stark naked, I must needs agree ;
 Who made me eat so sour a pie
 But Katherine of Vaucelles ? thereby
 Noé took third part of that fun ;
 Such wedding-gloves are ill to buy ;
 Good luck has he that deals with none !

But for that young man fair and free
 To pass those young maids lightly by,
 Nay, would you burn him quick, not he :
 Like broom-horsed witches though he fry.
 They are sweet as civet in his eye ;
 But trust them, and you're fooled anon ;
 For white or brown, and low or high,
 Good luck has he that deals with none !

A FRAGMENT ON DEATH.

AND Paris be it or Helen dying,
 Who dies soever, dies with pain.
 He that lacks breath and wind for sighing,
 His gall bursts on his heart ; and then

He sweats, God knows what sweat ! again,
 No man may ease him of his grief ;
 Child, brother, sister, none were fain
 To bail him thence for his relief.

Death makes him shudder, swoon, wax pale,
 Nose bend, veins stretch, and breath sur-
 render,
 Neck swell, flesh soften, joints that fail
 Crack their strained nerves and arteries
 slender.
 O woman's body found so tender,
 Smooth, sweet, so precious in men's eyes,

Must thou too bear such count to render?
 Yes ; or pass quick into the skies.

† [In the original here follows Villon's masterpiece, the matchless *Ballad of the Ladies of Old Times*, so incomparably rendered in the marvellous version of Mr. Rossetti ; followed in its turn by the succeeding poem, as inferior to its companion as is my attempt at translation of it to his triumph in that higher and harder field.—A. C. S.]

BALLAD OF THE LORDS OF OLD TIME.

AFTER THE FORMER ARGUMENT.

WHAT more ? Where is the third Calixt,
 Last of that name now dead and gone,
 Who held four years the Papalist ?
 Alphonso king of Aragon,
 The gracious lord, duke of Bourbon,
 And Arthur, duke of old Britaine ?
 And Charles the Seventh, that worthy
 one ?
 Even with the good knight Charlemain.
 The Scot too, king of mount and mist,
 With half his face vermillion,
 Men tell us, like an amethyst
 From brow to chin that blazed and shone ;
 The Cypriote king of old renown,
 Alas ! and that good king of Spain,

Whose name I cannot think upon ?
 Even with the good knight Charlemain.

No more to say of them I list ;
 'Tis all but vain, all dead and done :
 For death may no man born resist,
 Nor make appeal when death comes on.
 I make yet one more question ;
 Where's Lancelot, king of far Bohain ?
 Where's he whose grandson called him son ?
 Even with the good knight Charlemain.

Where is Guesclin, the good Breton ?
 The lord of the eastern mountain-chain,
 And the good late duke of Alençon ?
 Even with the good knight Charlemain.

BALLAD OF THE WOMEN OF PARIS.

ALBEIT the Venice girls get praise
 For their sweet speech and tender air,
 And tho' the old women have wise ways
 Of chaffering for amorous ware,
 Yet at my peril dare I swear,
 Search Rome, where God's grace mainly tar-
 ries,
 Florence and Savoy, everywhere,
 There's no good girl's lip out of Paris.
 The Naples women, as folk prattle,
 Are sweetly spoken and subtle enough :

German girls are good at tattle,
 And Prussians make their boast thereof ;
 Take Egypt for the next remove,
 Or that waste land the Tartar harries,
 Spain or Greece, for the matter of love,
 There's no good girl's lip out of Paris.

Breton and Swiss know nought of the matter,
 Gascony girls or girls of Toulouse ;
 Two fishwomen with a half hour's chatter
 Would shut them up by threes and twos ;
 Calais, Lorraine, and all their crews,

(Names enow the mad song marries)
 England and Picardy, search them and
 choose,
 There's no good girl's lip out of Paris.

Prince, give praise to our French ladies
 For the sweet sound their speaking carries ;
 'Twixt Rome and Cadiz many a maid is,
 But no good girl's lip out of Paris.

BALLAD WRITTEN FOR A BRIDEGROOM

WHICH VILLON GAVE TO A GENTLEMAN NEWLY MARRIED TO SEND TO HIS WIFE WHOM HE HAD
 WON WITH THE SWORD.

At daybreak, when the falcon claps his wings,
 No whit for grief, but noble heart and high,
 With loud glad noise he stirs himself and
 springs,
 And takes his meat and toward his lure draws
 nigh ;
 Such good I wish you ! Yea, and heartily
 I am fired with hope of true love's meed to get ;
 Know that Love writes it in his book ; for why,
 This is the end for which we twain are met.

Mine own heart's lady with no gainsayings
 You shall be always wholly till I die ;
 And in my right against all bitter things
 Sweet laurel with fresh rose its force shall try ;
 Seeing reason wills not that I cast love by
 (Nor here with reason shall I chide or fret)
 Nor cease to serve, but serve more constantly ;
 This is the end for which we twain are met.

And, which is more, when grief about me
 clings
 Through Fortune's fit and fume of jealousy,
 Your sweet kind eye beats down her threaten-
 ings
 As wind doth smoke ; such power sits in your
 eye.
 Thus in your field my seed of harvestry
 Thrives, for the fruit is like me that I set ;
 God bids me tend it with good husbandry ;
 This is the end for which we twain are met.

Princess, give ear to this my summary ;
 That heart of mine your heart's love should
 forget,
 Shall never be ; like trust in you put I :
 This is the end for which we twain are met.

BALLAD AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF FRANCE.

MAY he fall in with beasts that scatter fire,
 Like Jason, when he sought the fleece of
 gold,
 Or change from man to beast three years entire,
 As King Nebuchadnezzar did of old ;
 Or else have times as shameful and as bad
 As Trojan folk for ravished Helen had ;
 Or gulfed with Proserpine and Tantalus
 Let hell's deep fen devour him dolorous,

With worse to bear than Job's worst suf-
 ferance,
 Bound in his prison-maze with Dædalus,
 Who could wish evil to the state of
 France !

May he four months, like bitterns in the mire,
 Howl with head downmost in the lake-
 springs cold,

Or to bear harness like strong bulls for hire
 To the Great Turk for money down be
 sold ;
 Or thirty years like Magdalen live sad,
 With neither wool nor web of linen clad ;
 Drown like Narciss', or swing down pendulous
 Like Absalom with locks luxurious,
 Or liker Judas fallen to reprobance ;
 Or find such death as Simon sorcerous,
 Who could wish evil to the state of France !

May the old times come of fierce Octavian's
 ire,
 And in his belly molton coin be told ;
 May he like Victor in the mill expire,
 Crushed between moving millstones on
 him rolled,
 Or in deep sea drenched breathless, more
 adrad

Than in the whale's bulk Jonas, when God
 bade :
 From Phoebus' light, from Juno's treasure-
 house
 Driven, and from joys of Venus amorous,
 And cursed of God most high to the utter-
 ance,
 As was the Syrian king Antiochus,
 Who could wish evil to the state of France !

ENVOY.

Prince, may the bright-winged brood of Æolus
 To sea-king Glaucus' wild wood cavernous
 Bear him bereft of peace and hope's least
 glance,
 For worthless is he to get good of us,
 Who could wish evil to the state of France !

THE DISPUTE OF THE HEART AND BODY OF FRANÇOIS VILLON.

WHO is this I hear?—Lo, this is I, thine
 heart,
 That holds on merely now by a slender string.
 Strength holds me, shape and sense are rent
 apart,
 The blood in me is turned to a bitter thing,
 Seeing thee skulk here like a dog shivering.—
 Yea, and for what?—For that thy sense found
 sweet.—
 What irks it thee?—I feel the sting of it.—
 Leave me at peace.—Why?—Nay now, leave
 me at peace ;
 I will repent when I grow ripe in wit.—
 I say no more.—I care not though thou
 cease.—
 What art thou, trow?—A man worth praise,
 perfoy.—
 This is thy thirtieth year of wayfaring.—
 'Tis a mule's age.—Art thou a boy still?—
 Nay.—
 Is it hot lust that spurs thee with its sting,
 Grasping thy throat? Know'st thou not
 anything?—
 Yea, black and white, when milk is specked
 with flies,
 I can make out.—No more?—Nay, in no wise.
 Shall I begin again the count of these?—

Thou art undone.—I will make shift to rise.—
 I say no more.—I care not though thou
 cease.—

I have the sorrow of it, and thou the smart.
 Wert thou a poor mad fool or weak of wit,
 Then might'st thou plead this pretext with
 thine heart ;
 But if thou know not good from evil a whit,
 Either thy head is hard as stone to hit,
 Or shame, not honor, gives thee most content.
 What canst thou answer to this argument?—
 When I am dead I shall be well at ease.—
 God ! what good luck?—Thou art over elo-
 quent.—
 I say no more.—I care not though thou
 cease.—

Whence is this ill?—From sorrow and not
 from sin.
 When Saturn packed my wallet up for me
 I well believe he put these ills therein.—
 Fool, wilt thou make thy servant lord of
 thee?
 Hear now the wise King's counsel ; thus
 saith he ;
 All power upon the stars a wise man hath ;

There is no planet that shall do him scathe.—
Nay, as they made me I grow and I decrease.—

What say'st thou?—Truly this is all my faith.—
I say no more.—I care not though thou cease.—

Would'st thou live still?—God help me that I may!—

Then thou must—What? turn penitent and pray?—

Read always —What?—Grave words and good to say;

Leave off the ways of fools, lest they displease.—

Good; I will do it.—Wilt thou remember?—
Yea.—

Abide not till there come an evil day.

I say no more.—I care not though thou cease.—

EPISTLE IN FORM OF A BALLAD TO HIS FRIENDS.

HAVE pity, pity, friends, have pity on me,
Thus much at least, may it please you, of
your grace!

I lie not under hazel or hawthorn-tree
Down in this dungeon ditch, mine exile's
place

By leave of God and fortune's foul disgrace.
Girls, lovers, glad young folk and newly wed,
Jumpers and jugglers, tumbling heel o'er head,
Swift as a dart, and sharp as needle-ware,
Throats clear as bells that ring the kine to shed,
Your poor old friend, what, will you leave
him there?

Singers that sing at pleasure, lawlessly,
Light, laughing, gay of word and deed, that
race

And run like folk light-witted as ye be
And have in hand nor current coin nor base,
Ye wait too long, for now he's dying apace.
Rhymers of lays and roundels sung and read,
Ye'll brew him broth too late when he lies dead.

Nor wind nor lightning, sunbeam nor fresh air,
May pierce the thick wall's bound where lies
his bed;

Your poor old friend, what, will you leave
him there?

O noble folk from tithes and taxes free,
Come and behold him in this piteous case,
Ye that nor king nor emperor holds in fee,
But only God in heaven; behold his face
Who needs must fast, Sundays and holidays,
Which makes his teeth like rakes; and when
he hath fed

With never a cake for banquet but dry bread,
Must drench his bowels with much cold
watery fare,

With board nor stool, but low on earth instead;
Your poor old friend, what, will you leave
him there?

Princes afore-named, old and young foresald,
Get me the king's seal and my pardon sped,
And hoist me in some basket up with care:
So swine will help each other ill bested,
For where one squeaks they run in heaps ahead.
Your poor old friend, what, will you leave
him there?

THE EPITAPH IN FORM OF A BALLAD

WHICH VILLON MADE FOR HIMSELF AND HIS COMRADES, EXPECTING TO BE HANGED ALONG WITH THEM.

MEN, brother men, that after us yet live,
Let not your hearts too hard against us be;
For if some pity of us poor men ye give,
The sooner God shall take of you pity.
Here we are five or six strung up, you see,
And here the flesh that all too well we fed
Bit by bit eaten and rotten, rent and shred,

And we the bones grow dust and ash withal;
Let no man laugh at us discomforted,
But pray to God that he forgive us all.

If we call on you, brothers, to forgive,
Ye should not hold our prayer in scorn, though
we
Were slain by law; ye know that all alive

Have not wit alway to walk righteously ;
 Make therefore intercession heartily
 With him that of a virgin's womb was bred,
 That his grace be not as a dry well-head
 For us, nor let hell's thunder on us fall ;
 We are dead, let no man harry or vex us dead,
 But pray to God that he forgive us all.

The rain has washed and laundered us all five,
 And the sun dried and blackened; yea, perdie,
 Ravens and pies with beaks that rend and rive
 Have dug our eyes out, and plucked off for fee
 Our beards and eyebrows ; never are we free,

Not once, to rest ; but here and there still
 speed,
 Drive at its wild will by the wind's change
 led,
 More pecked of birds than fruits on garden-
 wall ;
 Men, for God's love, let no gibe here be said,
 But pray to God that he forgive us all.

Prince Jesus, that of all art lofd and head,
 Keep us, that hell be not our bitter bed ;
 We have nought to do in such a master's hall.
 Be not ye therefore of our fellowhead,
 But pray to God that he forgive us all.

THE CHILDREN OF THE POOR.

FROM THE FRENCH OF VICTOR HUGO.

TAKE heed of this small child of earth ;
 He is great : he bath in him God most
 high.

Children before their fleshly birth
 Are lights alive in the blue sky.

In our light bitter world of wrong
 They come ; God gives us them awhile.
 His speech is in their stammering tongue.
 And his forgiveness in their smile.

Their sweet light rests upon our eyes
 Alas ! their right to joy is plain.

If they are hungry, Paradise
 Weeps, and, if cold, Heaven thrills with
 pain.

The want that saps their sinless flower
 Speaks judgment on sin's ministers.
 Man holds an angel in his power.
 Ah ! deep in Heaven what thunder stirs,

When God seeks out these tender things
 Whom in the shadow where we sleep
 He sends us clothed about with wings,
 And find them ragged babes that weep !

NOCTURNE.

LA nuit écoute et se penche sur l'onde
 Pour y cueillir rien qu'un souffle d'amour;
 Pas de lueur, pas de musique au monde,
 Pas de sommeil pour moi ni de séjour.
 O mère, ô Nuit, de ta source profonde
 Verse-nous, verse enfin l'oubli du jour.

Verse l'oubli de l'angoisse et du jour;
 Chante; ton chant assoupit l'âme et l'onde:
 Fais de ton sein pour mon âme un séjour,
 Elle est bien lasse, ô mère, de ce monde,
 Où le baiser ne veut pas dire amour,
 Où l'âme aimée est moins que toi profonde.

Car toute chose aimée est moins profonde,
O Nuit, que toi, fille et mère du jour;
Toi dont l'attente est le répit du monde,
Toi dont le souffle est plein de mots d'amour,
Toi dont l'haleine enfle et réprime l'onde,
Toi dont l'ombre a tout le ciel pour séjour.

La misère humble et lasse, sans séjour,
S'abrite et dort sous ton aile profonde;
Tu fais à tous l'aumône de l'amour;
Toutes les soifs viennent boire à ton onde,
Tout ce qui pleure et se dérobe au jour,
Toutes les faims et tous les maux du monde.

Moi seul je veille et ne vois dans ce monde
Que ma douleur qui n'ait point de séjour
Où s'abriter sur ta rive profonde

Et s'endormir sous tes yeux loin du jour;
Je vais toujours cherchant au bord de l'onde
Le sang du beau pied blessé de l'amour.

La mer est sombre où tu naquis, amour,
Pleine des pleurs et des sanglots du monde;
On ne voit plus le gouffre où naît le jour
Luire et frémir sous ta leuer profonde;
Mais dans les cœurs d'homme où tu fais séjour
La douleur monte et baisse comme une onde.

ENVOI.

Fille de l'onde et mère de l'amour,
Du haut séjour plein de ta paix profonde
Sur ce bas monde épands un peu de jour.

THEOPHILE GAUTIER.

POUR mettre une couronne au front d'une
chanson,
Il semblait qu'en passant son pied semât des
roses,
Et que sa main cueillît comme des fleurs
écloses
Les étoiles au fond du ciel en floraison.

Sa parole de marbre et d'or aviat le son
Des clairs de l'été chassant les jours moroses;

Comme en Thrace Apollon banni des grands
cieux roses,
Il regardait du cœur l'Olympe, sa maison.

Le soleil fut pour lui le soleil du vieux monde,
Et son œil recherchait dans les flots embrasés
Le sillon immortel d'où s'élança sur l'onde
Vénus, que la mer molle enivrait de baisers:
Enfin, dieu ressaisi de sa splendeur première,
Il trône, et son sépulcre est bâti de lumière.

ODE.

(LE TOMBEAU DE THEOPHILE GAUTIER.)

QUELLE fleur, ô Mort, quel joyau, quel
chant,
Quel vent, quel rayon de soleil couchant,
Sur ton front penché, sur ta main avide,
Sur l'âpre pâleur de ta lèvre aride,
Vibre encore et luit?
Ton sein est sans lait, ton oreille est vide,
Ton œil plein de nuit.

Ta bouche est sans souffle et ton front sans
ride;
Mais l'éclair voilé d'une flamme humide,
Flamme éclose au cœur d'un ciel pluvieux,
Rallume ta lèvre et remplit tes yeux
De lueurs d'opale;
Ta bouche est vermeille et ton front joyeux,
O toi qui fus pâle.

Comme aux jours divins la mère des dieux,
 Reine au sein fécond, au corps radieux,
 Tu surgis au bord de la tombe amère;
 Tu nous apparais, ô Mort, vierge et mère,
 Effroi des humains,
 Le divin laurier sur la tête altière
 Et la lyre aux mains.

Nous reconnaissons, courbés vers la terre,
 Que c'est la splendeur de ta face austère
 Qui dore la nuit de nos longs malheurs;
 Que la vie ailée aux mille couleurs,
 Dont tu n'es que l'âme,
 Refait par tes mains les prés et les fleurs,
 La rose et la femme.

Lune constante! astre ami des douleurs
 Qui luis à travers la brume des pleurs!
 Quelle flamme au fond de ta clarté molle

Eclate et rougit, nouvelle auréole,
 Ton doux front voilé?
 Quelle étoile, ouvrant ses ailes, s'envole
 Du ciel étoilé?

Pleurant ce rayon de jour qu'on lui vole,
 L'homme exècre en vain la Mort triste et folle;
 Mais l'astre qui fut à nos yeux si beau,
 Là-haut, loin d'ici, dans un ciel nouveau
 Plein d'autres étoiles,
 Se lève, et pour lui la nuit du tombeau
 Entr'ouvre ses voiles.

L'âme est dans le corps comme un jeune oiseau
 Dont l'aile s'agit au bord du berceau;
 La mort, déliant cette aile inquiète,
 Quand nous écoutons la bouche muette
 Qui nous dit adieu,
 Fait de l'homme infime et sombre un poète,
 Du poète un dieu.

IN OBITUM THEOPHILI POETÆ.

O LUX Pieridum et laurigeri deliciæ dei,
 Vox leni Zephyro lenior, ut veris amans
 novi
 Tollit floridulis implicitum primitiis caput,
 Ten' ergo abripuit non rediturum, ut redeunt
 novo
 Flores vere novi, te quoque mors irrevoca-
 bilem?
 Cur vatem neque te Musa parens, te neque
 Gratia,
 Nec servare sibi te potuit fidem animi Venus?
 Quæ nunc ipsa magis vel puero te Cinyrefo,
 Te desiderium et flebilibus lumen amoribus,

Amissum queritur, sanguineis fusa comam
 genis.
 Tantis tu lacrymis digne, comes dulcis Apol-
 lini,
 Carum nomen eris dis superis atque sodalibus
 Nobis, quis eadem quæ tibi vivo patuit via
 Non æquis patet, at te sequimur passibus
 haud tuis,
 At mæsto cinerem carmine non illacrymabi-
 lem
 Tristesque exuvias floribus ac fletibus integris
 Unâ contegimus, nec citharâ nec sine tibiâ,
 Votoque unanimæ vocis Ave dicimus et Vale.

AD CATULLUM.

CATULLE frater, ut velim comes tibi
 Remota per virêta, per cavum nemus
 Sacrumque Ditis haud inhospiti specus,
 Pedem referre, trans aquam Stygis ducem
 Secutus unum et unicum, Catulle, te,
 Ut ora vatis optimi reviserem,
 Tui meique vatis ora, quem scio
 Venustiorum adisse vel tuo lacum,
 Benigniora semper arva vel tuis,
 Ubi serenus accipit suos deus,
 Tegitque myrtus implicata laurea,

Manuque mulcet halituque consecrat
 Fovetque blanda mors amabili sinu,
 Et ore fama fervido colit viros
 Alitque qualis unus ille par tibi
 Britannus unicusque in orbe præstitit
 Amicus ille noster, ille ceteris
 Poeta major, omnibusque floribus
 Priore Landor inclytum rosâ caput
 Revinxit extulitque, quam tuâ manu
 Recepit ac refovit integram suâ.

DEDICATION.

1878.

SOME nine years gone, as we dwelt together
In the sweet hushed heat of the south French
weather

Ere autumn fell on the vine-tressed hills
Or the season had shed one rose-red feather,

Friend, whose fame is a flame that fills
All eyes it lightens and hearts it thrills
With joy to be born of the blood which
bred

From a land that the grey sea girds and chills

The heart and spirit and hand and head
Whose might is as light on a dark day shed,
On a day now dark as a land's decline
Where all the peers of your praise are dead;

In a land and season of corn and vine
I pledged you a health from a beaker of mine
But half-way filled to the lip's edge yet
With hope for honey and song for wine.

Nine years have risen and eight years set
Since there by the wellspring our hands on it
met:

And the pledge of my songs that were
then to be,
I could wonder not, friend, though a friend
should forget.

For life's helm rocks to the windward and lee,
And time is as wind, and as waves are we;
And song is as foam that the sea-winds
fret,
Though the thought at its heart should be
deep as the sea.

POEMS AND BALLADS.

THIRD SERIES.

[To William Bell Scott, Poet and Painter, I dedicate these poems. In memory of many years.]

MARCH: AN ODE.

1887.

I.

ERE frost-flower and snow-blossom faded and
fell, and the splendour of winter had
passed out of sight,
The ways of the woodlands were fairer and
stranger than dreams that fulfil us in
sleep with delight;
The breath of the months of the winds had
hardened on tree-tops and branches that
glittered and swayed
Such wonders and glories of blossomlike snow
or of frost that outlightens all flowers till
it fade
That the sea was not lovelier than here was
the land, nor the night than the day, nor
the day than the night,
Nor the winter sublimer with storm than the
spring: such mirth had the madness and
might in thee made,
March, master of winds, bright minstrel and
marshal of storms that enkindle the sea-
son they smite.

II.

And now that the rage of thy rapture is satiate
with revel and ravin and spoil of the
snow,
And the branches it brightened are broken,
and shattered the tree-tops that only thy
wrath could lay low,
How should not thy lovers rejoice in thee,
leader and lord of the year that exults to
be born
So strong in thy strength and so glad in thy
gladness whose laughter puts winter and
sorrow to scorn?
Thou hast shaken the snows from thy wings,
and the frost on thy forehead is molten:
thy lips are aglow

As a lover's that kindle with kissing, and earth,
with her raiment and tresses yet wasted
and torn,
Takes breath as she smiles in the grasp of thy
passion to feel through her spirit the
sense of thee flow.

III.

Fain, fain would we see but again for an hour
what the wind and the sun have dispelled
and consumed,
Those full deep swan-soft feathers of snow
with whose luminous burden the branches
implumed
Hung heavily, curved as a half-bent bow, and
fledged not as birds are, but petalled as
flowers,
Each tree-top and branchlet a pinnacle jewelled
and carved, or a fountain that shines
as it showers,
But fixed as a fountain is fixed not, and
wrought not to last till by time or by
tempest entombed,
As a pinnacle carven and gilded of men: for
the date of its doom is no more than an
hour's,
One hour of the sun's when the warm wind
wakes him to wither the snow-flowers
that froze as they bloomed.

IV.

As the sunshine quenches the snowshine; as
April subdues thee, and yields up his
kingdom to May;
So time overcomes the regret that is born of
delight as it passes in passion away,
And leaves but a dream for desire to rejoice
in or mourn for with tears or thanks-
givings; but thou,
Bright god that art gone from us, maddest
and gladdest of months, to what goal
hast thou gone from us now?

For somewhere surely the storm of thy
laughter that lightens, the beat of thy
wings that play,
Must flame as a fire through the world, and
the heavens that we know not rejoice in
thee: surely thy brow
Hath lost not its radiance of empire, thy spirit
the joy that impelled it on quest as for
prey.

V.

Are thy feet on the ways of the limitless
waters, thy wings on the winds of the
waste north sea?
Are the fires of the false north dawn over
heavens where summer is stormful and
strong like thee
Now bright in the sight of thine eyes? are the
bastions of icebergs assailed by the blast
of thy breath?
Is it March with the wild north world when
April is waning? the word that the
changed year saith,
Is it echoed to northward with rapture of
passion reiterate from spirits triumphant
as we
Whose hearts were uplift at the blast of thy
clarions as men's reared from a sleep
that was death
And kindled to life that was one with the
world's and with thine? hast thou set
not the whole world free?

VI

For the breath of thy lips is freedom, and
freedom's the sense of thy spirit, the
sound of thy song,
Glad god of the north-east wind, whose heart
is as high as the hands of thy kingdom
are strong,

Thy kingdom whose empire is terror and joy,
twin-featured and fruitful of births
divine,
Days lit with the flame of the lamps of the
flowers, and nights that are drunken
with dew for wine,
And sleep not for joy of the stars that deepen
and quicken, a denser and fierier
throng,
And the world that thy breath bade whiten
and tremble rejoices at heart as they
strengthen and shine,
And earth gives thanks for the glory be-
queathed her, and knows of thy reign
that it wrought not wrong.

VII.

Thy spirit is quenched not, albeit we behold
not thy face in the crown of the steep
sky's arch,
And the bold first buds of the whin wax
golden, and witness arise of the thorn
and the larch:
Wild April, enkindled to laughter and storm
by the kiss of the wildest of winds that
blow,
Calls loud on his brother for witness; his
hands that were laden with blossom are
sprinkled with snow,
And his lips breathe winter, and laugh, and
relent; and the live woods feel not the
frost's flame parch;
For the flame of the spring that consumes not
but quickens is felt at the heart of the
forest aglow,
And the sparks that enkindled and fed it were
strewn from the hands of the gods of the
winds of March.

THE COMMONWEAL.

1887.

I.

EIGHT hundred years and twenty-one
Have shone and sunken since the land
Whose name is freedom bore such brand
As marks a captive, and the sun
Beheld her fettered hand.

II.

But ere dark time had shed as rain
Or sown on sterile earth as seed
That bears no fruit save tare and
weed
An age and half an age again,
She rose on Runnymede.

III.

Out of the shadow, starlike still,
She rose up radiant in her right,
And spake, and put to fear and flight
The lawless rule of aweless will
That pleads no right save might.

IV.

Nor since hath England ever borne
The burden laid on subject lands,
The rule that curbs and binds all hands
Save one, and marks for servile scorn
The heads it bows and brands.

V.

A commonweal arrayed and crowned
With gold and purple, girt with steel
At need, that foes must fear or feel,
We find her, as our fathers found,
Earth's lordliest commonweal.

VI.

And now that fifty years are flown
Since in a maiden's hand the sign
Of empire that no seas confine
First as a star to seaward shone,
We see their record shine.

VII.

A troubled record, foul and fair,
A simple record and serene,
Inscribes for praise a blameless queen,
For praise and blame an age of care
And change and ends unseen.

VIII.

Hope, wide of eye and wild of wing,
Rose with the sundawn of a reign
Whose grace should make the rough ways
plain,
And fill the worn old world with spring,
And heal its heart of pain.

IX.

Peace was to be on earth; men's hope
Was holier than their fathers had,
Their wisdom not more wise than glad:
They saw the gates of promise ope,
And heard what love's lips bade.

X.

Love armed with knowledge, winged and wise
Should hush the wind of war, and see,
They said, the sun of days to be
Bring round beneath serenest skies
A stormless jubilee.

XI.

Time, in the darkness unbeholden
That hides him from the sight of fear
And lets but dreaming hope draw near,
Smiled and was sad to hear such golden
Strains hail the all-golden year.

XII.

Strange clouds have risen between, and wild
Red stars of storm that lit the abyss
Wherein fierce fraud and violence kiss
And mock such promise as beguiled
The fiftieth year from this.

XIII.

War upon war, change after change,
Hath shaken thrones and towers to dust,
And hopes austere and faiths august
Have watched in patience stern and strange
Men's works unjust and just.

XIV.

As from some Alpine watch-tower's portal
Night, living yet, looks forth for dawn,
So from time's mistier mountain lawn
The spirit of man, in trust immortal,
Yearns toward a hope withdrawn.

XV.

The morning comes not, yet the night
Wanes, and men's eyes win strength to
see
Where twilight is, where light shall be
When conquered wrong and conquering right
Acclaim a world set free.

XVI.

Calm as our mother-land, the mother
Of faith and freedom, pure and wise,
Keeps watch beneath unchangeable skies,
When hath she watch the woes of other
Strange lands with alien eyes?

XVII.

Calm as she stands alone, what nation
Hath lacked an alms from English hands
What exiles from what stricken lands
Have lacked the shelter of the station
Where higher than all she stands?

XVIII.

Though time discrown and change dismantle
The pride of thrones and towers that frown,
How should they bring her glories down—
The sea cast round her like a mantle,
The sea-cloud like a crown?

XIX.

The sea, divine as heaven and deathless,
Is hers, and none but only she
Hath learnt the sea's word, none but we
Her children hear in heart the breathless
Bright watchword of the sea.

XX.

Heard not of others, or misheard
Of many a land for many a year,
The watchword Freedom fails not here
Of hearts that witness if the word
Find faith in England's ear.

XXI.

She, first to love the light, and daughter
Incarnate of the northern dawn,
She, round whose feet the wild waves fawn
When all their wrath of warring water
Sounds like a babe's breath drawn,

XXII.

How should not she best know, love best,
And best of all souls understand
The very soul of freedom, scanned
Far off, sought out in darkling quest
By men at heart unmanned?

XXIII.

They climb and fall, ensnared, enshrouded,
By mists of words and toils they set
To take themselves, till fierce regret
Grows mad with shame, and all their clouded
Red skies hang sunless yet.

XXIV.

But us the sun, not wholly risen
Nor equal now for all, illumines
With more of light than cloud that looms;
Of light that leads forth souls from prison
And breaks the seals of tombs.

XXV.

Did not her breasts who reared us rear
Him who took heaven in hand, and weighed
Bright world with world in balance laid?
What Newton's might could make not clear
Hath Darwin's might not made?

XXVI.

The forces of the dark dissolve,
The doorways of the dark are broken:
The word that casts out night is spoken,
And whence the springs of things evolve
Light born of night bears token.

XXVII.

She, loving light for light's sake only,
And truth for only truth's, and song
For song's sake and the sea's, how long
Hath she not borne the world her lonely
Witness of right and wrong?

XXVIII.

From light to light her eyes imperial
Turn, and require the further light,
More perfect than the sun's in sight,
Till star and sun seem all funereal
Lamps of the vaulted night.

XXIX.

She gazes till the strenuous soul
Within the rapture of her eyes
Creates or bids awake, arise,
The light she looks for, pure and whole
And worshipped of the wise.

XXX.

Such sons are hers, such radiant hands
Have borne abroad her lamp of old,
Such mouths of honey-dropping gold
Have sent across all seas and lands
Her fame as music rolled.

XXXI.

As music made of rolling thunder
That hurls through heaven its heart
sublime,
Its heart of joy, in charging chime,
So ring the songs that round and under
Her temple surge and climb.

XXXII.

A temple not by men's hands builded,
But moulded of the spirit, and wrought
Of passion and imperious thought;
With light beyond all sunlight gilded,
Whereby the sun seems nought.

XXXIII.

Thy shrine, our mother, seen for fairer
Than even thy natural face, made fair
With kisses of thine April air
Even now, when spring thy banner-bearer
Took up thy sign to bear;

XXXIV.

Thine annual sign from heaven's own arch
Given of the sun's hand into thine,
To rear and cheer each wildwood shrine
But now laid waste by wild-winged March,
March, mad with wind like wine.

XXXV.

From all thy brightening downs whereon
The windy seaward whin-flower shows
Blossom whose pride strikes pale the rose
Forth is the golden watchword gone
Whereat the world's face glows.

XXXVI.

Thy quickening woods rejoice and ring
Till earth seems glorious as the sea:
With yearning love too glad for glee
The world's heart quivers toward the spring
As all our hearts toward thee.

XXXVII.

Thee, mother, thee, our queen, who givest
Assurance to the heavens most high
And earth whereon her bondsmen sigh
That by the sea's grace while thou livest
Hope shall not wholly die.

XXXVIII.

That while thy free folk hold the van
Of all men, and the sea-spray shed
As dew more heavenly on thy head
Keeps bright thy face in sight of man,
Man's pride shall drop not dead.

XXXIX.

A pride more pure than humblest prayer,
More wise than wisdom born of doubt,
Girds for thy sake men's hearts about
With thrust and triumph that despair
And fear may cast not out.

XL.

Despair may ring men's hearts, and fear
Bow down their heads to kiss the dust,
Where patriot memories rot and rust,
And change makes faint a nation's cheer,
And faith yields up her trust.

XLI.

Not here this year have true men known,
Not here this year may true men know,
That brand of shame-compelling woe
Which bids but brave men shrink or groan
And lays but honour low.

XLII.

The strong spring wind blows notes of praise,
And hallowing pride of heart, and cheer
Unchanging, toward all true men here
Who hold the trust of ancient days
High as of old this year.

XLIII.

The days that made thee great are dead;
The days that now must keep thee great
Lie not in keeping of thy fate;
In thine they lie, whose heart and head
Sustain thy charge of state.

XLIV.

No state so proud, no pride so just,
The sun, through clouds at sunrise curled
Or clouds across the sunset whirled,
Hath sight of, nor has man such trust
As thine in all the world.

XLV.

Each hour that sees the sunset's crest
 Make bright thy shores ere day decline
 Sees dawn the sun on shores of thine,
 Sees west as east and east as west
 On thee their sovereign shine.

XLVI.

The sea's own heart must needs wax proud
 To have born the world a child like thee.
 What birth of earth might ever be
 Thy sister? Time, a wandering cloud,
 Is sunshine on thy sea.

XLVII.

Change mars not her; and thee, our mother,
 What change that irks or moves thee mars?
 What shock that shakes? what chance that
 jars?
 Time gave thee, as he gave none other,
 A station like a star's.

XLVIII.

The storm that shrieks, the wind that wages
 War with the wings of hopes that climb
 Too high toward heaven in doubt sublime,
 Assail not thee, approved of ages
 The towering crown of time.

XLIX.

Toward thee this year thy children turning
 With souls uplift of changeless cheer
 Salute with love that casts out fear,
 With hearts for beacons round thee burning,
 The token of this year.

L.

With just and sacred jubilation
 Let earth sound answer to the sea
 For witness, blown on winds as free,
 How England, how her crowning nation,
 Acclaims this jubilee.

THE ARMADA.

1588 . 1888.

I.

I.
 ENGLAND, mother born of seamen, daughter
 fostered of the sea,
 Mother more beloved than all who bear not
 all their children free,
 Reared and nursed and crowned and cher-
 ished by the sea-wind and the sun,
 Sweetest land and strongest, face most
 fair and mightiest heart in one,
 Stands not higher than when the centuries
 known of earth were less by three,
 When the strength that struck the whole
 world pale fell back from hers undone.

II.

At her feet were the heads of her foes bowed
 down, and the strengths of the storm of
 them stayed,
 And the hearts that were touched not with
 mercy with terror were touched and
 amazed and affrayed:
 Yea, hearts that had never been molten
 with pity were molten with fear as with
 flame,

And the priests of the Godhead whose temple
 is hell, and his heart is of iron and fire,
 And the swordsmen that served and the sea-
 men that sped them, whom peril could
 tame not or tire,
 Were as foam on the winds of the waters
 of England which tempest can tire not
 or tame.

III.

They were girded about with thunder, and
 lightning came forth of the rage of their
 strength,
 And the measure that measures the wings of
 the storm was the breadth of their force
 and their length:
 And the name of their might was invincible,
 covered and clothed with the terror of
 God;
 With his wrath were they winged, with his
 love were they fired, with the speed of
 his winds were they shod;
 With his soul were they filled, in his trust were
 they comforted: grace was upon them
 as night,
 And faith as the blackness of darkness: the
 fume of their balefires was fair in his
 sight,

The reek of them sweet as a savour of myrrh
 in his nostrils: the world that he made,
 Theirs was it by gift of his servants: the wind,
 if they spake in his name, was afraid,
 And the sun was a shadow before it, the stars
 were astonished with fear of it: fire
 Went up to them, fed with men living, and lit
 of men's hands for a shrine or a pyre;
 And the east and the west wind scattered their
 ashes abroad, that his name should be
 blest
 Of the tribes of the chosen whose blessings are
 curses from uttermost east unto west.

II.

I.

Hell for Spain, and heaven for England,—
 God to God, and man to man,—
 Met confronted, light with darkness, life with
 death: since time began,
 Never earth nor sea beheld so great a stake
 before them set,
 Save when Athens hurled back Asia from
 the lists wherein they met;
 Never since the sands of ages through the
 glass of history ran
 Saw the sun in heaven a lordlier day than
 this that lights us yet.

II.

For the light that abides upon England, the
 glory that rests on her godlike name,
 The pride that is love and the love that is
 faith, a perfume dissolved in flame,
 Took fire from the dawn of the fierce July
 when fleets were scattered as foam
 And squadrons as flakes of spray; when gal-
 leon and galliass that shadowed the sea
 Were swept from her waves like shadows that
 pass with the clouds they fell from, and
 she
 Laughed loud to the wind as it gave to
 her keeping the glories of Spain and
 Rome.

III.

Three hundred summers have fallen as leaves
 by the storms in their season thinned,
 Since northward the war-ships of Spain came
 sheer up the way of the south-west
 wind:

Where the citadel cliffs of England are flanked
 with bastions of serpentine,
 Far off to the windward loomed their hulls,
 an hundred and twenty-nine,
 All filled full of war, full-fraught with battle
 and charged with hale;
 Then store-ships weighted with cannon; and
 all were an hundred and fifty sail.
 The measureless menace of darkness an-
 hung-ered with hope to prevail upon light,
 The shadow of death made substance, the
 present and visible spirit of night,
 Came, shaped as a waxing or waning moon
 that rose with the fall of day,
 To the channel where couches the Lion in
 guard of the gate of the lustrous bay.
 Fair England, sweet as the sea that shields
 her, and pure as the sea from stain,
 Smiled, hearing hardly for scorn that stirred
 her the menace of saintly Spain.

III.

I.

'They that ride over ocean wide with hempen
 bridle and horse of tree,'
 How shall they in the darkening day of wrath
 and anguish and fear go free?
 How shall these that have curbed the seas not
 feel his bridle who made the sea?

God shall bow them and break them now: for
 what is man in the Lord God's sight?
 Fear shall shake them, and shame shall break,
 and all the noon of their pride be night:
 These that sinned shall the ravening wind of
 doom bring under, and judgment smite.

England broke from her neck the yoke, and
 rent the fetter, and mocked the rod:
 Shrines of old that she decked with gold she
 turned to dust, to the dust she trod:
 What is she, that the wind and sea should
 fight beside her, and war with God?

Lo, the cloud of his ships that crowd her chan-
 nel's inlet with storm sublime,
 Darker far than the tempests are that sweep
 the skies of her northmost clime;
 Huge and dense as the walls that fence the
 secret darkness of unknown time.

Mast on mast as a tower goes past, and sail
by sail as a cloud's wing spread;
Fleet by fleet, as the throngs whose feet keep
time with death in his dance of dread;
Galleons dark as the helmsman's bark of old
that ferried to hell the dead.

Squadrons proud as their lords, and loud with
tramp of soldiers and chant of priests;
Slaves there told by the thousandfold, made
fast in bondage as herded beasts;
Lords and slaves that the sweet free waves
shall feed on, satiate with funeral feasts.

Nay, not so shall it be, they know; their priests
have said it; can priesthood lie?
God shall keep them, their God shall sleep
not: peril and evil shall pass them by:
Nay, for these are his children; seas and winds
shall bid not his children die.

II.

So they boast them, the monstrous host whose
menace mocks at the dawn: and here
They that wait at the wild sea's gate, and
watch the darkness of doom draw near,
How shall they in their evil day sustain the
strength of their hearts for fear?

Full July in the fervent sky sets forth her
twentieth of changing mornis:
Winds fall mild that of late waxed wild: no
presage whispers or wails or warns:
Far to west on the bland sea's breast a sailing
crescent uprears her horns.

Seven wide miles the serene sea smiles be-
tween them stretching from rim to rim:
Soft they shine, but a darker sign should bid
not hope or belief wax dim:
God's are these men, and not the sea's: their
trust is set not on her but him.

God's? but who is the God whereto the
prayers and incense of these men rise?
What is he, that the wind and sea should fear
him, quelled by his sunbright eyes?
What, that men should return again, and hail
him Lord of the servile skies?

Hell's own flame at his heavenly name leaps
higher and laughs, and its gulfs rejoice:

Plague and death from his baneful breath
take life and lighten, and praise his
choice:

Chosen are they to devour for prey the tribes
that hear not and fear his voice.

Ay, but we that the wind and sea gird round
with shelter of storms and waves

Know not him that ye worship, grim as
dreams that quicken from dead men's
graves:

God is one with the sea, the sun, the land that
nursed us, the love that saves.

Love whose heart is in ours, and part of all
things noble and all things fair;

Sweet and free as the circling sea, sublime
and kind as the fostering air;

Pure of shame as is England's name, whose
crowns to come are as crowns that were.

IV.

I.

But the Lord of darkness, the God whose
love is a flaming fire,

The master whose mercy fulfils wide hell till
its tortures tire,

He shall surely have heed of his servants who
serve him for love, not hire.

They shall fetter the wing of the wind whose
pinions are plumed with foam:

For now shall thy horn be exalted, and now
shall thy bolt strike home;

Yea, now shall thy kingdom come, Lord God
of the priests of Rome.

They shall cast thy curb on the waters, and
bridle the waves of the sea:

They shall say to her, Peace, be still: and
stillness and peace shall be:

And the winds and the storms shall hear them,
and tremble, and worship thee.

Thy breath shall darken the morning, and
wither the mounting sun;

And the daysprings, frozen and fettered, shall
know thee, and cease to run;

The heart of the world shall feel thee, and die,
and thy will be done.

The spirit of man that would sound thee, and
search out causes of things,

Shall shrink and subside and praise thee: and
wisdom, with plume-plucked wings,
Shall cower at thy feet and confess thee, that
none may fathom thy springs.

The fountains of song that await but the wind
of an April to be
To burst the bonds of the winter, and speak
with the sound of a sea,
The blast of thy mouth shall quench them:
and song shall be only of thee.

The days that are dead shall quicken, the
seasons that were shall return,
And the streets and the pastures of England,
the woods that burgeon and yearn,
Shall be whitened with ashes of women and
children and men that burn.

For the mother shall burn with the babe
sprung forth of her womb in fire,
And bride with bridegroom, and brother
with sister, and son with sire;
And the noise of the flames shall be sweet in
thine ears as the sound of a lyre.

Yea, so shall thy kingdom be stablished, and
so shall the signs of it be:
And the world shall know, and the wind shall
speak, and the sun shall see,
That these are the works of thy servants,
whose works bear witness to thee.

II.

But the dusk of the day falls fruitless, whose
light should have lit them on:
Sails flash through the gloom to shoreward,
eclipsed as the sun that shone:
And the west wind wakes with dawn, and the
hope that was here is gone.

Around they wheel and around, two knots to
the Spaniard's one,
The wind-swift warriors of England, who
shoot as with shafts of the sun,
With fourfold shots for the Spaniard's, that
spare not till day be done.

And the wind with the sundown sharpens,
and hurtles the ships to the lee,
And Spaniard on Spaniard smites, and shatters
and yields; and we,

Ere battle begin, stand lords of the battle,
acclaimed of the sea.

And the day sweeps round to the nightward;
and heavy and hard the waves
Roll in on the herd of the hurtling galleons;
and masters and slaves
Reel blind in the grasp of the dark strong
wind that shall dig their graves.

For the sepulchres hollowed and shaped of
the wind in the swerve of the seas,
The graves that gape for their pasture, and
laugh, thrilled through by the breeze,
The sweet soft merciless waters, await and
are fain of these.

As the hiss of a Python heaving in menace of
doom to be
They hear through the clear night round them
whose hours are as clouds that flee,
The whisper of tempest sleeping, the heave
and the hiss of the sea.

But faith is theirs, and with faith are they
girded and helmed and shod:
Invincible are they, almighty, elect for a sword
and a rod;
Invincible even as their God is omnipotent,
infinite, God.

In him is their strength, who have sworn that
his glory shall wax not dim:
In his name are their war-ships hallowed as
mightiest of all that swim:
The men that shall cope with these, and con-
quer, shall cast out him.

In him is the trust of their hearts; the desire
of their eyes is he;
The light of their ways, made lightning for
men that would fain be free:
Earth's hosts are with them, and with them
is heaven: but with us is the sea.

V.

I.

And a day and a night pass over;
And the heart of their chief swells high;
For England, the warrior, the rover,
Whose banners on all winds fly,
Soul-stricken, he saith, by the shadow of
death, holds off him, and draws not nigh.

And the wind and the dawn together
 Make in from the gleaming east:
 And fain of the wild glad weather
 As famine is fain of feast,
 And fain of the fight, forth sweeps in its might
 the host of the Lord's high priest.

And lightly before the breeze
 The ships of his foes take wing:
 Are they scattered, the lords of the seas?
 Are they broken, the foes of the king?
 And ever now higher as a mounting fire the
 hopes of the Spaniard spring.

And a windless night comes down:
 And a breezeless morning, bright
 With promise of praise to crown
 The close of the crowning fight,
 Leaps up as the foe's heart leaps, and glows
 with lustrous rapture of light.

And stinted of gear for battle
 The ships of the sea's folk lie,
 Unwarlike, herded as cattle,
 Six miles from the foe's eye
 That fastens as flame on the sight of them
 tame and offenceless, and ranged as to
 die.

Surely the souls in them quail,
 They are stricken and withered at
 heart,
 When in on them, sail by sail,
 Fierce marvels of monstrous art,
 Tower darkening on tower till the sea-winds
 cower crowds down as to hurl them apart.

And the windless weather is kindly,
 And comforts the host in these;
 And their hearts are uplift in them
 blindly,
 And blindly they boast at ease
 That the next day's fight shall exalt them, and
 smite with destruction the lords of the
 seas.

II.

And lightly the proud hearts prattle,
 And lightly the dawn draws nigh,
 The dawn of the doom of the battle
 When these shall falter and fly;
 No day more great in the roll of fate filled
 ever within the sky.

To fightward they go as to feastward,
 And the tempest of ships that drive
 Sets eastward ever and eastward,
 Till closer they strain and strive;
 And the shots that rain on the hulls of Spain
 are as thunders afire and alive.

And about them the blithe sea smiles
 And flashes to windward and lee
 Round capes and headlands and isles
 That heed not if war there be;
 Round Sark, round Wight, green jewels of
 light in the ring of the golden sea.

But the men that within them abide
 Are stout of spirit and stark
 As rocks that repel the tide,
 As day that repels the dark,
 And the light bequeathed from their swords
 unsheathed shines lineal on Wight and
 on Sark.

And eastward the storm sets ever,
 The storm of the sails that strain
 And follow and close and sever
 And lose and return and gain;
 And English thunder divides in sunder the
 holds of the ships of Spain.

Southward to Calais, appalled
 And astonished, the vast fleet veers;
 And the skies are shrouded and palled,
 But the moonless midnight hears
 And sees how swift on them drive and drift
 strange flames that the darkness fears.

They fly through the night from shore-
 ward,
 Heart-stricken till morning break,
 And ever to scourge them forward
 Drives down on them England's Drake,
 And hurls them in as they hurtle and spin and
 stagger, with storm to wake.

VI.

I.

And now is their time come on them.
 For eastward they drift and reel,
 With the shallows of Flanders ahead,
 with destruction and havoc at heel,
 With God for their comfort only, the
 God whom they serve; and here
 Their Lord, of his great loving-kindness,
 may revel and make good cheer;

Though ever his lips wax thirstier with
drinking, and hotter the lusts in him
swell;
For he feeds the thirst that consumes him
with blood, and his winepress fumes
with the reck of hell.

II.

Fierce noon beats hard on the battle;
the galleons that loom to the lee
Bow down, heel over, uplifting their
shelterless hulls from the sea—
From scuppers aspirit with blood, from
guns dismounted and dumb,
The signs of the doom they looked for,
the loud mute witnesses come.
They press with sunset to seaward for com-
fort: and shall not they find it there?
O servants of God most high, shall his winds
not pass you by, and his waves not spare?

III.

The wings of the south-west wind are widen-
ed; the breath of his fervent lips,
More keen than a sword's edge, fiercer than
fire, falls full on the plunging ships.
The pilot is he of their northward flight, their
stay and their steersman he;
A helmsman clothed with the tempest, and
girdled with strength to constrain the
sea.
And the host of them trembles and quails,
caught fast in his hand as a bird in the
toils;
For the wrath and the joy that fulfil him are
mightier than man's, whom he slays and
spoils.
And vainly, with heart divided in sunder, and
labour of wavering will,
The lord of their host takes counsel with hope
if haply their star shine still,
If haply some light be left them of chance to
renew and redeem the fray;
But the will of the black south-wester is lord
of the councils of war to-day.
One only spirit it quells not, a splendour un-
darkened of chance or time;
Be the praise of his foes with Oquendo for
ever, a name as a star sublime.
But here what aid in a hero's heart, what help
in his hand may be?
For ever the dark wind whitens and blackens
the hollows and heights of the sea,

And galley by galley, divided and desolate,
founders; and none takes heed,
Nor foe nor friend, if they perish; forlorn,
cast off in their uttermost need,
They sink in the whelm of the waters, as peb-
bles by children from shoreward hurled,
In the North Sea's waters that end not, nor
know they a bourn but the bourn of the
world.
Past many a secure unavailable harbour, and
many a loud stream's mouth,
Past Humber and Tees and Tyne and Tweed,
they fly, scourged on from the south,
And torn by the scourge of the storm-wind
that smites as a harper smites on a lyre,
And consumed of the storm as the sacrifice
loved of their God is consumed with fire,
And devoured of the darkness as men that are
slain in the fires of his love are devoured,
And deflowered of their lives by the storms, as
by priests is the spirit of life deflowered.
For the wind, of its godlike mercy, relents not,
and hounds them ahead to the north,
With English hunters at heel, till now is the
herd of them past the Forth,
All huddled and hurtled seaward; and now
need none wage war upon these,
Nor huntsmen follow the quarry whose fall is
the pastime sought of the seas.
Day upon day upon day confounds them, with
measureless mists that swell,
With drift of rains everlasting and dense as
the fumes of ascending hell.
The visions of priest and of prophet beholding
his enemies bruised of his rod
Beheld but the likeness of this that is fallen on
the faithful, the friends of God.
Northward, and northward, and northward
they stagger and shudder and swerve
and flit,
Dismantled of masts and of yards, with sails
by the fangs of the storm-wind split.
But north of the headland whose name is
Wrath, by the wrath or the ruth of the
sea,
They are swept or sustained to the westward,
and drive through the rollers aloof to the
lee.
Some strive yet northward for Iceland, and
perish: but some through the storm-hewn
straits
That sunder the Shetlands and Orkneys are
borne of the breath which is God's or
fate's:

And some, by the dawn of September, at last
 give thanks as for stars that smile,
 For the winds have swept them to shelter and
 sight of the cliffs of a Catholic isle.
 Though many the fierce rocks feed on, and
 many the merciless heretic slays,
 Yet some that have laboured to land with
 their treasure are trustful, and give God
 praise.
 And the kernes of murderous Ireland, athirst
 with a greed everlasting of blood,
 Unslakable ever with slaughter and spoil,
 rage down as a ravening flood,
 To slay and to flay of their shining apparel
 their brethren whom shipwreck spares;
 Such faith and such mercy, such love and
 such manhood, such hands and such
 hearts are theirs.
 Short shrift to her foes gives England, but
 shorter doth Ireland to friends; and worse
 Fare they that come with a blessing on treason
 than they that come with a curse.
 Hacked, harried, and mangled of axes and
 skenes, three thousand naked and dead
 Bear witness of Catholic Ireland, what sons
 of what sires at her breasts are bred.
 Winds are pitiful, waves are merciful, tempest
 and storm are kind:
 The waters that smite may spare, and the
 thunder is deaf, and the lightning is blind.
 Of these perchance at his need may a man,
 though they know it not, yet find grace:
 But grace, if another be hardened against him,
 he gets not at this man's face.
 For his ear that hears and his eye that sees
 the wreck and the wail of men,
 And his heart that relents not within him, but
 hungers, are like as the wolf's in his den.
 Worthy are these to worship their master, the
 murderous Lord of lies,
 Who hath given to the pontiff his servant the
 keys of the pit and the keys of the skies.
 Wild famine and red-shod rapine are cruel,
 and bitter with blood are their feasts;
 But fiercer than famine and redder than
 rapine the hands and the hearts of priests.
 God, God bade these to the battle; and here,
 on a land by his servants trod,
 They perish, a lordly blood-offering, subdued
 by the hands of the servants of God.
 These also were fed of his priests with faith,
 with the milk of his word and the wine;
 These two are fulfilled with the spirit of dark-
 ness that guided their quest divine.

And here, cast up from the ravening sea on
 the mild land's merciful breast,
 This comfort they find of their fellows in
 worship; this guerdon is theirs of their
 quest.
 Death was captain, and doom was pilot, and
 darkness the chart of their way,
 Night and hell had in charge and in keeping
 the host of the foes of day.
 Invincible, vanquished, impregnable, shat-
 tered, a sign to her foes of fear,
 A sign to the world and the stars of laughter,
 the fleet of the Lord lies here.
 Nay, for none may declare the place of the
 ruin wherein she lies;
 Nay, for none hath beholden the grave
 whence never a ghost shall rise.
 The fleet of the foemen of England hath
 found not one but a thousand graves;
 And he that shall number and name them shall
 number by name and by tale the waves.

VII.

I.

Sixtus, Pope of the Church whose hope takes
 flight for heaven to dethrone the sun,
 Philip, king that wouldst turn our spring to
 winter, blasted, appalled, undone,
 Prince and priest, let a mourner's feast give
 thanks to God for your conquest won.
 England's heel is upon you: kneel, O priest,
 O prince, in the dust, and cry,
 'Lord, why thus? art thou wroth with us
 whose faith was great in thee, God most
 high?
 Whence is this, that the serpent's hiss derides
 us? Lord, can thy pledged word lie?
 'God of hell, are its flames that swell quenched
 now for ever, extinct and dead?
 Who shall fear thee? or who shall hear the
 word thy servants who feared thee said?
 Lord, art thou as the dead gods now, whose
 arm is shortened, whose rede is read?
 'Yet we thought it was not for nought thy
 word was given us, to guard and guide:
 Yet we deemed that they had not dreamed
 who put their trust in thee. Hast thou
 lied?
 God our Lord, was the sacred sword we drew
 not drawn on thy Church's side?

'England hates thee as hell's own gates; and
England triumphs, and Rome bows
down:

England mocks at thee; England's rocks cast
off thy servants to drive and drown:

England loathes thee; and fame betroths and
plights with England her faith for crown.

'Spain clings fast to thee; Spain, aghast with
anguish, cries to thee; where art thou?

Spain puts trust in thee; lo, the dust that soils
and darkens her prostrate brow!

Spain is true to thy service; who shall raise up
Spain for thy service now?

'Who shall praise thee, if none may raise thy
servants up, nor affright thy foes?

Winter wanes, and the woods and plains for-
get the likeness of storms and snows:

So shall fear of thee fade even here: and what
shall follow thee no man knows.'

Lords of night, who would breathe your blight
on April's morning and August's noon,

God your Lord, the condemned, the abhorred,
sinks hellward, smitten with deathlike
swoon:

Death's own dart in his hateful heart now
thrills, and night shall receive him soon

God the Devil, thy reign of revel is here for
ever eclipsed and fled:

God the Liar, everlasting fire lays hold at last
on thee, hand and head

God the Accurst, the consuming thirst that
burns thee never shall here be fed.

II.

England, queen of the waves whose green
inviolate girdle enrings thee round,

Mother fair as the morning, where is now the
place of thy foemen found?

Still the sea that salutes us free proclaims
them stricken, acclaims thee crowned.

Times may change, and the skies grow strange
with signs of treason and fraud and fear:

Foes in union of strange communion may rise
against thee from far and near:

Sloth and greed on thy strength may feed as
cankers waxing from year to year.

Yet, though treason and fierce unreason
should league and lie and defame and
smite,

We that know thee, how far below thee the
hatred burns of the sons of night,

We that love thee, behold above thee the wit-
ness written of life in light.

Life that shines from thee shows forth signs
that none may read not but eyeless
foes:

Hate, born blind, in his abject mind grows
hopeful now but as madness grows:

Love, born wise, with exultant eyes adores thy
glory, beholds and grows.

Truth is in thee, and none may win thee to lie,
forsaking the face of truth:

Freedom lives by the grace she gives thee,
born again from thy deathless youth:

Faith should fail, and the world turn pale,
wert thou the prey of the serpent's
tooth.

Greed and fraud, unabashed, unawed, may
strive to sting thee at heel in vain:

Craft and fear and mistrust may leer and
mourn and murmur and plead and plain:

Thou art thou: and thy sunbright brow is
hers that blasted the strength of Spain.

Mother, mother beloved, none other could
claim in place of thee England's
place:

Earth bears none that beholds the sun so
pure of record, so clothed with grace:

Dear our mother, nor son nor brother is thine,
as strong or as fair of face.

How shalt thou be abased? or how shall fear
take hold of thy heart? of thine,

England, maiden immortal, laden with charge
of life and with hopes divine?

Earth shall wither, when eyes turned hither
behold not light in her darkness shine.

England, none that is born thy son, and lives,
by grace of thy glory, free,

Lives and yearns not at heart and burns with
hope to serve as he worships thee;

None may sing thee: the sea-wind's wing beats
down our songs as it hails the sea.

TO A SEAMEW.

WHEN I had wings, my brother,
 Such wings were mine as thine;
 Such life my heart remembers
 In all as wild Septembers
 As this when life seems other,
 Though sweet, than once was mine;
 When I had wings, my brother,
 Such wings were mine as thine.

Such life as thrills and quickens
 The silence of thy flight,
 Or fills thy note's elation
 With lordlier exultation
 Than man's, whose faint heart sickens
 With hopes and fears that blight
 Such life as thrills and quickens
 The silence of thy flight.

Thy cry from windward clanging
 Makes all the cliffs rejoice;
 Though storm clothe seas with sorrow,
 Thy call salutes the morrow;
 While shades of pain seem hanging
 Round earth's most rapturous voice,
 Thy cry from windward clanging
 Makes all the cliffs rejoice.

We, sons and sires of seamen,
 Whose home is all the sea,
 What place man may, we claim it;
 But thine—whose thought may name it?
 Free birds live higher than freemen,
 And gladlier ye than we—
 We, sons and sires of seamen,
 Whose home is all the sea.

For you the storm sounds only
 More notes of more delight
 Than earth's in sunniest weather:
 When heaven and sea together
 Join strengths against the lonely
 Lost bark borne down by night,
 For you the storm sounds only
 More notes of more delight.

With wider wing, and louder
 Long clarion-call of joy,
 Thy tribe salutes the terror
 Of darkness, wild as error,
 But sure as truth, and prouder
 Than waves with man for toy;
 With wider wing, and louder
 Long clarion-call of joy.

The wave's wing spreads and flutters,
 The wave's heart swells and breaks;
 One moment's passion thrills it,
 One pulse of power fulfils it
 And ends the pride it utters
 When, loud with life that quakes,
 The wave's wing spreads and flutters,
 The wave's heart swells and breaks.

But thine and thou, my brother,
 Keep heart and wing more high
 Than aught may scare or sunder;
 The waves whose throats are thunder
 Fall hurtling each on other,
 And triumph as they die;
 But thine and thou, my brother,
 Keep heart and wing more high.

More high than wrath or anguish,
 More strong than pride or fear,
 The sense or soul half hidden
 In thee, for us forbidden,
 Bids thee nor change nor languish,
 But live thy life as here,
 More high than wrath or anguish,
 More strong than pride or fear.

We are fallen, even we, whose passion
 On earth is nearest thine;
 Who sing, and cease from flying;
 Who live, and dream of dying:
 Grey time, in time's grey fashion,
 Bids wingless creatures pine:
 We are fallen, even we, whose passion
 On earth is nearest thine.

The lark knows no such rapture,
 Such joy no nightingale,
 As sways the songless measure
 Wherein thy wings take pleasure:
 Thy love may no man capture,
 Thy pride may no man quail;
 The lark knows no such rapture,
 Such joy no nightingale.

And we, whom dreams embolden,
 We can but creep and sing
 And watch through heaven's waste hollow
 The flight no sight may follow
 To the utter bourne beholden
 Of none that lack thy wing:
 And we, whom dreams embolden,
 We can but creep and sing.

Our dreams have wings that falter,
 Our hearts bear hopes that die;
 For thee no dream could better
 A life no fears may fether,
 A pride no care can alter,
 That wots not whence or why
 Our dreams have wings that falter,
 Our hearts bear hopes that die.

With joy more fierce and sweeter
 Than joys we deem divine
 Their lives by time untarnished,
 Are girt about and garnished,

Who match the wave's full metre
 And drink the wind's wild wine
 With joy more fierce and sweeter
 Than joys we deem divine.

Ah, well were I for ever,
 Wouldst thou change lives with me,
 And take my song's wild honey,
 And give me back thy sunny
 Wide eyes that weary never,
 And wings that search the sea;
 Ah, well were I for ever,
 Wouldst thou change lives with me.

Beachy Head, September, 1886.

PAN AND THALASSIUS.

A LYRICAL IDYL.

THALASSIUS.

PAN!

PAN.

O sea-stray, seed of Apollo,
 What word wouldst thou have with me?
 My ways thou wast fain to follow
 Or ever the years hailed thee
 Man.

Now

If August brood on the valleys,
 If satyrs laugh on the lawns,
 What part in the wildwood alleys
 Hast thou with the fleet-foot fauns—
 Thou?

See!

Thy feet are a man's—not cloven
 Like these, not light as a boy's:
 The tresses and tendrils inwoven
 That lure us, the lure of them cloy
 Thee.

Us

The joy of the wild woods never
 Leaves free of the thirst it slakes:
 The wild love throbs in us ever
 That burns in the dense hot brakes
 Thus.

Life,

Eternal, passionate, awless,
 Insatiable, mutable, dear,
 Makes all men's law for us lawless:
 We strive not: how should we fear
 Strife?

We,

The birds and the bright winds know not
 Such joys as are ours in the mild
 Warm woodland; joys such as grow not
 In waste green fields of the wild
 Sea.

No;

Long since, in the world's wind veering,
 Thy heart was estranged from me:
 Sweet Echo shall yield thee not hearing:
 What have we to do with thee?
 Go.

THALASSIUS.

Ay!

Such wrath on thy nostril quivers
 As once in Sicilian heat
 Bade herdsmen quail, and the rivers
 Shrank, leaving a path for thy feet
 Dry?

Nay,
 Low down in the hot soft hollow
 Too snakelike hisses thy spleen:
 'O sea-stray, seed of Apollo!'
 What ill hast thou heard or seen?
 Say.

Man
 Knows well, if he hears beside him
 The snarl of thy wrath at noon,
 What evil may soon betide him,
 Or late, if thou smite not soon,
 Pan.

Me
 The sound of thy flute, that flatters
 The woods as they smile and sigh,
 Charmed fast as it charms thy satyrs,
 Can charm no faster than I
 Thee.

Fast
 Thy music may charm the splendid
 Wide woodland silence to sleep
 With sounds and dreams of thee blended
 And whispers of waters that creep
 Past.

Here
 The spell of thee breathes and passes
 And bids the heart in me pause,
 Hushed soft as the leaves and the grasses
 Are hushed if the storm's foot draws
 Near.

Yet
 The panic that strikes down strangers
 Transgressing thy ways unaware
 Affrights not me nor endangers
 Through dread of thy secret snare
 Set.

PAN.
 Whence
 May man find heart to deride me?
 Who made his face as a star
 To shine as a God's beside me?
 Nay, get thee away from us, far
 Hence.

THALASSIUS.
 Then
 Shall no man's heart, as he raises
 A hymn to thy secret head,
 Wax great with the godhead he praises:
 Thou, God, shalt be like unto dead
 Men.

PAN.
 Grace
 I take not of men's thanksgiving,
 I crave not of lips that live;
 They die, and behold, I am living,
 While they and their dead Gods give
 Place.

THALASSIUS.
 Yea:
 Too lightly the words were spoken
 That mourned or mocked at thee dead:
 But whose was the word, the token,
 The song that answered and said
 Nay?

PAN.
 Whose
 But mine, in the midnight hidden,
 Clothed round with the strength of night
 And mysteries of things forbidden
 For all but the one most bright
 Muse?

THALASSIUS.
 Hers
 Or thine, O Pan, was the token
 That gave back empire to thee
 When power in thy hands lay broken
 As reeds that quake if a bee
 Stirs?

PAN.
 Whom
 Have I in my wide woods need of?
 Urania's limitless eyes
 Behold not mine end, though they read of
 A word that shall speak to the skies
 Doom.

THALASSIUS.
 She
 Gave back to thee kingdom and glory,
 And grace that was thine of yore,
 And life to thy leaves, late hoary
 As weeds cast up from the hoar
 Sea.

Song
 Can bid faith shine as the morning
 Though light in the world be none:
 Death shrinks if her tongue sound warning,
 Night quails, and beholds the sun
 Strong.

PAN.

Night

Bare rule over men for ages
Whose worship wist not of me
And gat but sorrows for wages,
And hardly for tears could see
Light.

Call

No more on the starry presence
Whose light through the long dark swam:
Hold fast to the green world's pleasure:
For I that am lord of it am
All.

THALASSIUS.

God,

God Pan, from the glad wood's portal
The breaths of thy song blow sweet:
But woods may be walked in of mortal
Man's thought, where never thy feet
Trod.

Thine

All secrets of growth and of birth are,
All glories of flower and of tree,
Wheresoever the wonders of earth are;
The words of the spell of the sea
Mine.

A BALLAD OF BATH.

LIKE a queen enchanted who may not laugh
or weep,

Glad at heart and guarded from change
and care like ours,

Girt about with beauty by days and nights
that creep

Soft as breathless ripples that softly shore-
ward sweep,

Lies the lovely city whose grace no grief
deflowers.

Age and grey forgetfulness, time that shifts
and veers,

Touch not thee, our fairest, whose charm no
rival nears,

Hailed as England's Florence of one
whose praise gives grace,

Landor, once thy lover, a name that love
reveres:

Dawn and noon and sunset are one before
thy face.

Dawn whereof we know not, and noon whose
fruit we reap,

Garnered up in record of years that fell
like flowers,

Sunset liker sunrise along the shining steep
Whence thy fair face lightens, and where thy
soft springs leap,

Crown at once and gird thee with grace of
guardian powers.

Loved of men beloved of us, souls that fame
inspheres,

All thine air hath music for him who dreams
and hears;

Voices mixed of multitudes, feet of friends
that pace,

Witness why for ever, if heaven's face clouds
or clears,

Dawn and noon and sunset are one before
thy face.

Peace hath here found harbourage mild as
very sleep:

Not the hills and waters, the fields and
wildwood bowers,

Smile or speak more tenderly, clothed with
peace more deep,

Here than memory whispers of days our mem-
ories keep

Fast with love and laughter and dreams of
withered hours.

Bright were these as blossoms of old, and
thought endears

Still the fair soft phantoms that pass with
smiles or tears,

Sweet as roseleaves hoarded and dried
wherein we trace

Still the soul and spirit of sense that lives and
cheers:

Dawn and noon and sunset are one before
thy face.

City lulled asleep by the chime of passing
years,

Sweeter smiles thy rest than the radiance
round thy peers;

Only love and lovely remembrance here
have place.

Time on thee lies lighter than music on men's
ears;

Dawn and noon and sunset are one before
thy face.

IN A GARDEN.

BABY, see the flowers!
 —Baby sees
 Fairer things than these,
 Fairer though they be than dreams of
 ours.

Baby, hear the birds!
 —Baby knows
 Better songs than those,
 Sweeter though they sound than sweetest
 words.

Baby, see the moon!
 —Baby's eyes
 Laugh to watch it rise,
 Answering light with love and night with
 noon.

Baby, hear the sea!
 —Baby's face
 Takes a graver grace,
 Touched with wonder what the sound may be.

Baby, see the star!
 —Baby's hand
 Opens, warm and bland,
 Calm in claim of all things fair that are.

Baby, hear the bells!
 —Baby's head
 Bows, as ripe for bed,
 Now the flowers curl round and close their
 cells.

Baby, flower of light,
 Sleep, and see
 Brighter dreams than we,
 Till good day shall smile away good night.

A RHYME.

BABE, if rhyme be none
 For that sweet small word
 Babe, the sweetest one
 Ever heard,

Right it is and meet
 Rhyme should keep not true
 Time with such a sweet
 Thing as you.

Meet it is that rhyme
 Should not gain such grace;
 What is April's prime
 To your face?

What to yours is May's
 Rosiest smile? what sound
 Like your laughter sways
 All hearts round?

None can tell in metre
 Fit for ears on earth
 What sweet star grew sweeter
 At your birth.

Wisdom doubts what may be:
 Hope, with smile sublime,
 Trusts: but neither, baby,
 Knows the rhyme.

Wisdom lies down lonely;
 Hope keeps watch from far;
 None but one seer only
 Sees the star.

Love alone, with yearning
 Heart for astrolabe,
 Takes the star's height, burning
 O'er the babe.

BABY-BIRD.

BABY-BIRD, baby-bird,
 Ne'er a song on earth
 May be heard, may be heard,
 Rich as yours in mirth.

All your flickering fingers,
 All your twinkling toes,
 Play like light that lingers
 Till the clear song close.

Baby-bird, baby-bird,
Your grave majestic eyes
Like a bird's warbled words
Speak, and sorrow dies.

Sorrow dies for love's sake,
Love grows one with mirth,
Even for one white dove's sake,
Born a babe on earth.

Baby-bird, baby-bird,
Chirping loud and long,
Other birds hush their words,
Harkening toward your song.

Sweet as spring though it ring,
Full of love's own lures,
Weak and wrong sounds their song,
Singing after yours.

Baby-bird, baby-bird,
The happy heart that hears
Seems to win back within
Heaven, and cast out fears.

Earth and sun seem as one
Sweet light and one sweet word
Known of none here but one,
Known of one sweet bird.

OLIVE.

I.

Who may praise her?
Eyes where midnight shames the sun,
Hair of night and sunshine spun,
Woven of dawn's or twilight's loom,
Radiant darkness, lustrous gloom,
Godlike childhood's flowerlike bloom,
None may praise aright, nor sing
Half the grace wherewith like spring
Love arrays her.

II.

Love untold
Sings in silence, speaks in light
Shed from each fair feature, bright
Still from heaven, whence toward us, now
Nine years since, she deigned to bow
Down the brightness of her brow,
Deigned to pass through mortal birth:
Reverence calls her, here on earth,
Nine years old.

III.

Love's deep duty,
Even when love transfigured grows
Worship, all too surely knows
How, though love may cast out fear,
Yet the debt divine and dear
Due to childhood's godhead here
May by love of man be paid
Never; never song be made
Worth its beauty.

IV.

Nought is all
Sung or said or dreamed or thought
Ever, set beside it; nought
All the love that man may give—
Love whose prayer should be, 'Forgive!'
Heaven, we see, on earth may live;
Earth can thank not heaven, we know,
Save with songs that ebb and flow,
Rise and fall.

V.

No man living,
No man dead, save haply one
Now gone homeward past the sun,
Ever found such grace as might
Tune his tongue to praise aright
Children, flowers of love and light,
Whom our praise dispraises: we
Sing, in sooth, but not as he
Sang thanksgiving.

VI.

Hope that smiled,
Seeing her new-born beauty, made
Out of heaven's own light and shade,
Smiled not half so sweetly: love,
Seeing the sun, afar above,
Warm the nest that rears the dove,
Sees, more bright than moon or sun,
All the heaven of heavens in one
Little child.

VII.

Who may sing her?
 Wings of angels when they stir
 Make no music worthy her:
 Sweeter sound her shy soft words
 Here than songs of God's own birds
 Whom the fire of rapture girds
 Round with light from love's face lit:
 Hands of angels find no fit
 Gifts to bring her.

VIII.

Babes at birth
 Wear as raiment round them cast,
 Keep as witness toward their past,
 Tokens left of heaven; and each,

Ere its lips learn mortal speech,
 Ere sweet heaven pass on pass reach,
 Bears in undiverted eyes
 Proof of unforgotten skies
 Here on earth.

IX.

Quenched as embers
 Quenched with flakes of rain or snow
 Till the last faint flame burns low,
 All those lustrous memories lie
 Dead with babyhood gone by:
 Yet in her they dare not die:
 Others, fair as heaven is, yet,
 Now they share not heaven, forget:
 She remembers.

A WORD WITH THE WIND.

LORD of days and nights that hear thy word
 of wintry warning,
 Wind, whose feet are set on ways that
 none may tread,
 Change the nest wherein thy wings are fledged
 for flight by morning,
 Change the harbour whence at dawn thy
 sails are spread.
 Not the dawn, ere yet the imprisoning night
 has half released her,
 More desires the sun's full face of cheer,
 than we,
 Well as yet we love the strength of the iron-
 tongued north-easter,
 Yearn for wind to meet us as we front the
 sea.
 All thy ways are good, O wind, and all the
 world should fester,
 Were thy fourfold godhead quenched, or
 stilled thy strife:
 Yet the waves and we desire too long the
 deep south-wester,
 Whence the waters quicken shoreward,
 clothed with life.
 Yet the field not made for ploughing save of
 keels nor harrowing
 Save of storm-winds lies unbrightened by
 thy breath:
 Banded broad with ruddy samphire glow the
 sea-banks narrowing
 Westward, while the sea gleams chill and
 still as death.

Sharp and strange from inland sounds thy
 bitter note of battle,
 Blown between grim skies and waters sul-
 len-souled,
 Till the baffled seas bear back, rocks roar and
 shingles rattle,
 Vexed and angered and anhungered and
 a-cold.
 Change thy note, and give the waves their
 will, and all the measure,
 Full and perfect, of the music of their
 might,
 Let it fill the bays with thunderous notes and
 throbs of pleasure,
 Shake the shores with passion, sound at
 once and smite.
 Sweet are even the mild low notes of wind and
 sea, but sweeter
 Sounds the song whose choral wrath of
 raging rhyme
 Bids the shelving shoals keep tune with
 storm's imperious metre,
 Bids the rocks and reefs respond in rap-
 turous chime.
 Sweet the lisp and lulling whisper and luxu-
 rious laughter,
 Soft as love or sleep, of waves whereon the
 sun
 Dreams, and dreams not of the darkling hours
 before nor after,
 Winged with cloud whose wrath shall bid
 love's day be done.

Yet shall darkness bring the awakening sea
 a lordlier lover,
 Clothed with strength more amorous and
 more strenuous will,
 Whence her heart of hearts shall kindle and
 her soul recover
 Sense of love too keen to lie for love's
 sake still.
 Let thy strong south-western music sound,
 and bid the billows
 Brighten, proud and glad to feel thy
 scourge and kiss
 Sting and soothe and sway them, bowed as
 aspens bend or willows,
 Yet resurgent still in breathless rage of
 bliss.
 All to-day the slow sleek ripples hardly bear
 up shoreward,
 Charged with sighs more light than laugh-
 ter, faint and fair,
 Like a woodland lake's weak wavelets lightly
 lingering forward,
 Soft and listless as the slumber-stricken
 air.
 Be the sunshine bared or veiled, the sky
 superb or shrouded,
 Still the waters, lax and languid, chafed
 and foiled,
 Keen and thwarted, pale and patient, clothed
 with fire or clouded,
 Vex their heart in vain, or sleep like ser-
 pents coiled.

Thee they look for, blind and baffled, wan
 with wrath and weary,
 Blown for ever back by winds that rock the
 bird:
 Winds that seamews breast subdue the sea,
 and bid the dreary
 Waves be weak as hearts made sick with
 hope deferred.
 Let thy clarion sound from westward, let the
 south bear token
 How the glories of thy godhead sound and
 shine:
 Bid the land rejoice to see the land-wind's
 broad wings broken,
 Bid the sea take comfort, bid the world be
 thine.
 Half the world abhors thee beating back the
 sea, and blackening
 Heaven with fierce and woful change of
 fluctuant form:
 All the world acclaims thee shifting sail again,
 and slackening
 Cloud by cloud the close-reefed cordage of
 the storm.
 Sweeter fields and brighter woods and lordlier
 hills than waken
 Here at sunrise never hailed the sun and
 thee:
 Turn thee then, and give them comfort, shed
 like rain and shaken
 Far as foam that laughs and leaps along
 the sea.

NEAP-TIDE.

FAR off is the sea, and the land is afar:
 The low banks reach at the sky,
 Seen hence, and are heavenward high;
 Though light for the leap of a boy they are,
 And the far sea late was nigh.
 The fair wild fields and the circling downs,
 The bright sweet marshes and meads
 All glorious with flowerlike weeds,
 The great grey churches, the sea-washed towns,
 Recede as a dream recedes.
 The world draws back, and the world's light
 wanes,
 As a dream dies down and is dead;
 And the clouds and the gleams overhead
 Change, and change; and the sea remains,
 A shadow of dreamlike dread.

Wild, and woful, and pale, and grey,
 A shadow of sleepless fear,
 A corpse with the night for bier,
 The fairest thing that beholds the day
 Lies haggard and hopeless here.
 And the wind's wings, broken and spent, sub-
 side;
 And the dumb waste world is hoar,
 And strange as the sea the shore;
 And shadows of shapeless dreams abide
 Where life may abide no more.
 A sail to seaward, a sound from shoreward,
 And the spell were broken that seems
 To reign in a world of dreams
 Where vainly the dreamer's feet make forward
 And vainly the low sky gleams.

The sea-forsaken forlorn deep-wrinkled
 Salt slanting stretches of sand
 That slope to the seaward hand,
 Were they fain of the ripples that flashed and
 twinkled
 And laughed as they struck the strand?

As bells on the reins of the fairies ring
 The ripples that kissed them rang,
 The light from the sundawn sprang,
 And the sweetest of songs that the world may
 sing
 Was theirs when the full sea sang.

Now no light is in heaven; and now
 Not a note of the sea-wind's tune
 Rings hither: the bleak sky's boon
 Grants hardly sight of a grey sun's brow—
 A sun more sad than the moon.

More sad than a moon that clouds beleaguer
 And storm is a scourge to smite,
 The sick sun's shadowlike light

Grows faint as the clouds and the waves wax
 eager,
 And withers away from sight.

The day's heart cowers, and the night's heart
 quickens:
 Full fain would the day be dead
 And the stark night reign in his stead:
 The sea falls dumb as the sea-fog thickens
 And the sunset dies for dread.

Outside of the range of time, whose breath
 Is keen as the manslayer's knife
 And his peace but a truce for strife,
 Who knows if haply the shadow of death
 May be not the light of life?

For the storm and the rain and the darkness
 borrow
 But an hour from the suns to be,
 But a strange swift passage, that we
 May rejoice, who have mourned not to-day,
 to-morrow,
 In the sun and the wind and the sea.

BY THE WAYSIDE.

SUMMER's face was rosiest, skies and woods
 were mellow,
 Earth had heaven to friend, and heaven had
 earth to fellow,
 When we met where wooded hills and
 meadows meet.
 Autumn's face is pale, and all her late leaves
 yellow,
 Now that here again we greet.

Wan with years whereof this eightieth nears
 December,
 Fair and bright with love, the kind old
 face I know
 Shines above the sweet small twain whose
 eyes remember
 Heaven, and fill with April's light this pale
 November,
 Though the dark year's glass run low.

Like a rose whose joy of life her silence utters
 When the birds are loud, and low the lulled
 wind mutters,
 Grave and silent shines the boy nigh three
 years old.
 Wise and sweet his smile, that falters not nor
 flutters,
 Glows, and turns the gloom to gold.

Like the new-born sun's that strikes the dark
 and slays it,
 So that even for love of light it smiles and
 dies,
 Laughs the boy's blithe face whose fair fourth
 year arrays it
 All with light of life and mirth that stirs and
 sways it
 And fulfils the deep wide eyes.

Wide and warm with glowing laughter's ex-
 ultation,
 Full of welcome, full of sunbright jubilation,
 Flash my taller friend's quick eyebeams,
 charged with glee;
 But with softer still and sweeter salutation
 Shine my smaller friend's on me.

Little arms flung round my bending neck,
 that yoke it
 Fast in tender bondage, draw my face
 down too
 Toward the flower-soft face whose dumb deep
 smiles invoke it,
 Dumb, but love can read the radiant eyes
 that woke it,
 Blue as June's mid heaven is blue.

How may men find refuge, how should hearts
 be shielded,
 From the weapons thus by little children
 wielded,
 When they lift such eyes as light this
 lustrous face—
 Eyes that woke love sleeping unawares, and
 yielded,
 Love for love, a gift of grace,

Grace beyond man's merit, love that laughs,
 forgiving
 Even the sin of being no more a child, nor
 worth
 Trust and love that lavish gifts above man's
 giving,
 Touch or glance of eyes and lips the sweetest
 living,
 Fair as heaven and kind as earth?

NIGHT.

I.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF GIOVANNI STROZZI.

NIGHT, whom in shape so sweet thou here
 may'st see
 Sleeping, was by an Angel sculptured thus
 In marble, and since she sleeps hath life
 like us:
 Thou doubt'st? Awake her: she will speak
 to thee.

II.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI.

Sleep likes me well, and better yet to know
 I am but stone. While shame and grief
 must be,
 Good hap is mine, to feel not, nor to see:
 Take heed, then, lest thou wake me: ah, speak
 low.

IN TIME OF MOURNING.

'RETURN,' we dare not as we fain
 Would cry from hearts that yearn:
 Love dares not bid our dead again
 Return.
 O hearts that strain and burn
 As fires fast fettered burn and strain!
 Bow down, lie still, and learn.

The heart that healed all hearts of pain
 No funeral rites inurn:
 Its echoes, while the stars remain,
 Return.

May, 1885.

THE INTERPRETERS.

I.

DAYS dawn on us that make amends for many
 Sometimes,
 When heaven and earth seem sweeter even
 than any
 Man's rhymes.

Light had not all been quenched in France,
 or quelled
 In Greece,
 Had Homer sung not, or had Hugo held
 His peace.

Had Sappho's self not left her word thus
 long
 For token,
 The sea round Lesbos yet in waves of song
 Had spoken.

II.

And yet these days of subtler air and finer
 Delight,
 When lovelier looks the darkness, and
 diviner
 The light—

The gift they give of all these golden
hours,
Whose urn
Pours forth reverberate rays or shadowing
showers
In turn—

Clouds, beams, and winds that make the live
day's track
Seem living—
What were they did no spirit give them
back
Thanksgiving?

III.

Dead air, dead fire, dead shapes and shadows,
telling
Time nought;
Man gives them sense and soul by song, and
dwelling
In thought.

In human thought their being endures, their
power
Abides:
Else were their life a thing that each light
hour
Derides.

The years live, work, sigh, smile, and die,
with all
They cherish;
The soul endures, though dreams that fed it
fall
And perish.

IV.

In human thought have all things habitation;
Our days
Laugh, lower, and lighten past, and find no
station
That stays.

But thought and faith are mightier things
than time
Can wrong,
Made splendid once with speech, or made
sublime
By song.

Remembrance, though the tide of change that
rolls
Wax hoary,
Gives earth and heaven, for song's sake and
the soul's,
Their glory.

July 16th, 1885.

THE RECALL.

RETURN, they cry, ere yet your day
Set, and the sky grow stern:
Return, strayed souls, while yet ye may
Return.
But heavens beyond us yearn;
Yea, heights of heaven above the sway
Of stars that eyes discern.

The soul whose wings from shoreward
stray
Makes toward her viewless bourne
Though trustless faith and unfaith say,
Return.

BY TWILIGHT.

If wedream that desire of the distance above us
Should be fettered by fear of the shadows that
seem,
If we wake, to be nought, but to hate or to
love us
If we dream.
Night sinks on the soul, and the stars as they
gleam
Speak menace or mourning, with tongues to
reprove us

That we deemed of them better than tern
may deem.

But if hope may not lure us, if fear may not
move us,
Thought lightens the darkness wherein the
supreme
Pure presence of death shall assure us, and
prove us
If we dream.

A BABY'S EPITAPH.

APRIL made me: winter laid me here away
asleep.

Bright as Maytime was my daytime; night is
soft and deep:

Though the morrow brings forth sorrow, well
are ye that weep.

Ye that held me dear beheld me not a twelve-
month long:

All the while ye saw me smile, ye knew not
whence the song

Came that made me smile, and laid me here,
and wrought you wrong.

Angels, calling from your brawling world one
undefiled,

Homeward bade me, and forbade me here to
rest beguiled:

Here I sleep not, pass, and weep not here
upon your child.

ON THE DEATH OF SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

FOURSCORE and five times has the gradual
year

Risen and fulfilled its days of youth and
eld

Since first the child's eyes opening first
beheld

Light, who now leaves behind to help us
here

Light shed from song as starlight from a
sphere

Serene as summer; song whose charm
compelled

The sovereign soul made flesh in Arte-
velde

To stand august before us and austere,
Half sad with mortal knowledge, all sublime
With trust that takes no taint from change
or time.

Trust in man's might of manhood. Strong
and sage,

Clothed round with reverence of remem-
bering hearts,

He, twin-born with our nigh departing age,
Into the light of peace and fame departs.

IN MEMORY OF JOHN WILLIAM INCHBOLD.

FAREWELL: how should not such as thou fare
well,

Though we fare ill that love thee, and
that live,

And know, whate'er the days wherein we
dwell

May give us, thee again they will not
give?

Peace, rest, and sleep are all we know of death,
And all we dream of comfort: yet for thee,
Whose breath of life was bright and strenuous
breath,

We think the change is other than we see.

The seal of sleep set on thine eyes to-day
Surely can seal not up the keen swift light

That lit them once for ever. Night can slay
None save the children of the womb of
night.

The fire that burns up dawn to bring forth
noon

Was father of thy spirit: how shouldst
thou

Die as they die for whom the sun and
moon

Are silent? Thee the darkness holds not
now:

Them, while they looked upon the light, and
deemed

That life was theirs for living in the sun,
The darkness held in bondage: and they
dreamed,

Who knew not that such life as theirs was
none.

To thee the sun spake, and the morning sang
Notes deep and clear as life or heaven:
the sea

That sounds for them but wild waste music
rang

Notes that were lost not when they rang
for thee.

The mountains clothed with light and night
and change,

The lakes alive with wind and cloud and
sun

Made answer, by constraint sublime and
strange,

To the ardent hand that bade thy will be
done.

We may not bid the mountains mourn, the
sea

That lived and lightened from thine hand
again

Moan, as of old would men that mourned as
we

A man beloved, a man elect of men,

A man that loved them. Vain, divine and
vain,

The dream that touched with thoughts or
tears of ours

The spirit of sense that lives in sun and rain,
Sings out in birds, and breathes and fades in
flowers.

Not for our joy they live, and for our grief
They die not. Though thine eye be closed,
thine hand

Powerless as mine to paint them, not a leaf
In English woods or glades of Switzerland

Falls earlier now, fades faster. All our love
Moves not our mother's changeless heart,
who gives

A little light to eyes and stars above,
A little life to each man's heart that lives.

A little life to heaven and earth and sea,
To stars and souls revealed of night and
day,

And change, the one thing changeless: yet
shall she

Cease too, perchance, and perish. Who
shall say?

Our mother Nature, dark and sweet as sleep,
And strange as life and strong as death,
holds fast,

Even as she holds our hearts alive, the deep
Dumb secret of her first-born births and
last.

But this, we know, shall cease not till the
strife

Of nights and days and fears and hopes
find end;

This, through the brief eternities of life,
Endures, and calls from death a living
friend;

The love made strong with knowledge,
whence confirmed

The whole soul takes assurance, and the
past

(So by time's measure, not by memory's,
termed)

Lives present life, and mingles first with
last.

I, now long since thy guest of many days,
Who found thy hearth a brother's, and
with thee

Tracked in and out the lines of rolling
bays

And banks and gulfs and reaches of the
sea—

Deep dens wherein the wrestling water sobs
And pants with restless pain, of reflowing
breath

Till all the sunless hollow sounds and throbs
With ebb and flow of eddies dark as
death—

I know not what more glorious world, what
waves

More bright with life,—if brighter aught
may live

Than those that filled and fled their tidal
caves—

May now give back the love thou hast
to give.

Tintagel, and the long Trebarwith sand,
Lone Camelford, and Boscastle divine
With dower of southern blossom, bright and
bland

Above the roar of granite-baffled brine,

Shall hear no more by joyous night or day
From downs or causeways good to rove
and ride

Or feet of ours or horse-hoofs urge their
way

That sped us here and there by tower and
tide.

The headlands and the hollows and the waves,
 For all our love, forget us: where I am
 Thou art not: deeper sleeps the shadow on
 graves
 Than in the sunless gulf that once we
 swam.

Thou hast swum too soon the sea of death:
 for us
 'oo soon, but if truth bless love's blind
 belief
 With, born of hope and memory, says not
 thus:
 And joy for thee for me should mean not
 grief.

And joy for thee, if ever soul of man
 Found joy in change and life of ampler
 birth
 Than here pens in the spirit for a span,
 Must be the life that doubt calls death
 on earth.

For if, beyond the shadow and the sleep,
 A place there be for souls without a stain,
 Where peace is perfect, and delight more deep
 Than seas or skies that change and shine
 again,

There none of all unsullied souls that live
 May hold a surer station: none may lend
 More light to hope's or memory's lamp, nor
 give
 More joy than thine to those that called
 thee friend.

Yea, joy from sorrow's barren womb is born
 When faith begets on grief the godlike child:
 As midnight years with starry sense of morn
 In Arctic summers, though the sea wax
 wild,

So love, whose name is memory, thrills at
 heart,
 Remembering and rejoicing in thee, now
 Alive where love may dream not what thou
 art
 But knows that higher than hope or love
 art thou.

'Whatever heaven, if heaven at all may be,
 Await the sacred souls of good men dead,
 'There, now we mourn who loved him here, is
 he.'
 So, sweet and stern of speech, the Roman
 said,

Erect in grief, in trust erect, and gave
 His deathless dead a deathless life even
 here
 Where day bears down on day as wave on
 wave
 And not man's smile fades faster than
 his tear.

Albeit this gift be given not me to give,
 Nor power be mine to break time's silent
 spell,
 Not less shall love that dies not while I live
 Bid thee, beloved in life and death, fare-
 well.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.

NEW YEAR, be good to England. Bid her
 name
 Shine sunlike as of old on all the sea:
 Make strong her soul: set all her spirit free:
 Bind fast her homeborn foes with links of
 shame
 More strong than iron and more keen than
 flame:
 Seal up their lips for shame's sake: so
 shall she
 Who was the light that lightened freedom be,
 For all false tongues, in all men's eyes the
 same.

O last-born child of Time, earth's eldest
 lord,
 God undiscrowned of godhead, who for
 man
 Begets all good and evil things that
 live,
 Do thou, his new-begotten son, implore
 Of hearts that hope and fear not, make
 thy span
 Bright with such light as history bids
 thee give.

Jan. 1, 1889.

TO SIR RICHARD F. BURTON.

(ON HIS TRANSLATION OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.)

WESTWARD the sun sinks, grave and glad;
 but far
 Eastward, with laughter and tempestuous
 tears,
 Cloud, rain, and splendour as of orient
 spears,
 Keen as the sea's thrill toward a kindling star,
 The sundawn breaks the barren twilight's bar
 And fires the mist and slays it. Years
 on years
 Vanish, but he that hearkens eastward hears
 Bright music from the world where shadows
 are.

Where shadows are not shadows. Hand in
 hand
 A man's word bids them rise and smile and
 stand
 And triumph. All that glorious orient
 glows
 Defiant of the dusk. Our twilight land
 Trembles; but all the heaven is all one
 rose,
 Whence laughing love dissolves her frosts
 and snows.

NELL GWYN.

SWEET heart, that no taint of the throne or the
 stage
 Could touch with unclean transformation,
 or alter
 To the likeness of courtiers whose con-
 sciences falter
 At the smile or the frown, at the mirth or the
 rage,
 Of a master whom chance could inflame or
 assuage,
 Our Lady of Laughter, invoked in no
 psalter,
 Adored of no faithful that cringe and
 that palter,

Praise be with thee yet from a hag-ridden
 age.

Our Lady of Pity thou wast: and to thee
 All England, whose sons are the sons of the
 sea,
 Gives thanks, and will hear not if history
 snarls
 When the name of the friend of her sailors is
 spoken:
 And thy lover she cannot but love—by the
 token
 That thy name was the last on the lips
 of King Charles.

CALIBAN ON ARIEL.

'His backward voice is to utter foul speeches and to detract.'

RE tongue is loosed of that most lying slave,
 Whom stripes may move, not kindness.
 Listen: 'Lo,
 The real god of song, Lord Stephano,
 That's a brave god, if ever god were brave,
 And bears celestial liquor: but,' the knave
 (A most ridiculous monster) howls, 'we
 know
 From Ariel's lips what springs of poison
 flow,
 The chicken-heart blasphemer! Hear him
 rave!'

Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil him-
 self
 Upon thy wicked dam, the witch whose
 name
 Is darkness, and the sun her eyes'
 offence,
 Though hell's hot sewerage breed no loathlier
 elf,
 Men cry not shame upon thee, seeing thy
 shame
 So perfect: they but bid thee—'Hag-
 sced, hence!'

THE WEARY WEDDING.

O DAUGHTER, why do ye laugh and weep,
One with another?

For woe to wake and for will to sleep,
Mother, my mother.

But weep ye winna the day ye wed,
One with another.

For tears are dry when the springs are dead,
Mother, my mother.

Too long have your tears run down like rain,
One with another.

For a long love lost and a sweet love slain,
Mother, my mother.

Too long have your tears dripped down like
dew,
One with another.

For a knight that my sire and my brethren
slew,
Mother, my mother.

Let past things perish and dead griefs lie,
One with another.

O fain would I weep not, and fain would I die,
Mother, my mother.

Fair gifts we give ye, to laugh and live,
One with another.

But sair and strange are the gifts I give,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give for your father's love?
One with another.

Fruits full few and thorns enough,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give for your mother's sake?
One with another.

Tears to brew and tares to bake,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give your sister Jean?
One with another.

A bier to build and a babe to wean,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give your sister Nell?
One with another.

The end of life and beginning of hell,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give your sister Kate?
One with another.

Earth's door and hell's gate,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give your brother Will?
One with another.

Life's grief and world's ill,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give your brother Hugh?
One with another.

A bed of turf to turn into,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give your brother John?
One with another.

The dust of death to feed upon,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give your bauld bridegroom?
One with another.

A barren bed and an empty room,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give your bridegroom's
friend?

One with another.
A weary foot to the weary end,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye give your blithe bridesmaid?
One with another.

Grief to sew and sorrow to braid,
Mother, my mother.

And what will ye drink the day ye're wed?
One with another.

But ae drink of the wan well-head,
Mother, my mother.

And whatten a water is that to draw?
One with another.

We maun draw thereof a', we maun drink
thereof a',
Mother, my mother.

And what shall ye pu' where the well rinsdeep?
One with another.

Green herb of death, fine flower of sleep,
Mother, my mother.

Are there any fishes that swim therein?

One with another.

The white fish grace, and the red fish sin,

Mother, my mother.

Are there any birds that sing thereby?

One with another.

O when they come thither they sing till they die,

Mother, my mother.

Is there any draw-bucket to that well-head?

One with another.

There's a wee well-bucket hangs low by a thread,

Mother, my mother.

And whatten a thread is that to spin?

One with another.

It's green for grace, and it's black for sin,

Mother, my mother.

And what will ye strew on your bride-chamber floor?

One with another.

But one strewing and no more,

Mother, my mother.

And whatten a strewing shall that one be?

One with another.

The dust of earth and sand of the sea,

Mother, my mother.

And what will ye take to build your bed?

One with another.

Sighing and shame and the bones of the dead,

Mother, my mother.

And what will ye wear for your weddinggown?

One with another.

Grass for the green and dust for the brown,

Mother, my mother.

And what will ye wear for your wedding lace?

One with another.

A heavy heart and a hidden face,

Mother, my mother.

And what will ye wear for a wreath to your head?

One with another.

Ash for the white and blood for the red,

Mother, my mother.

And what will ye wear for your wedding ring?

One with another.

A weary thought for a weary thing,

Mother, my mother.

And what shall the chimes and the bell-ropes play?

One with another,

A weary tune on a weary day,

Mother, my mother.

And what shall be sung for your wedding song?

One with another.

A weary word of a weary wrong,

Mother, my mother,

The world's way with me runs back,

One with another,

Wedded in white and buried in black,

Mother, my mother.

The world's day and the world's night,

One with another,

Wedded in black and buried in white,

Mother, my mother.

The world's bliss and the world's teen,

One with another,

It's red for white and it's black for green,

Mother, my mother.

The world's will and the world's way,

One with another,

It's sighing for night and crying for day,

Mother, my mother.

The world's good and the world's worth,

One with another,

It's earth to flesh and it's flesh to earth,

Mother, my mother.

* * * * *

When she came out at the kirkyard gate,
(One with another)

The bridegroom's mother was there in wait
(Mother, my mother.)

O mother, where is my great green bed,
(One with another)

Silk at the foot and gold at the head,
Mother, my mother?

Yea, it is ready, the silk and the gold,
One with another.

But line it well that I lie not cold,
Mother, my mother.

She laid her cheek to the velvet and vair,
One with another,

She laid her arms up under her hair.
(Mother, my mother.)

Her gold hair fell through her arms fu'
low,
One with another:

Lord God, bring me out of woe!
(Mother, my mother.)

Her gold hair fell in the gay reeds green,
One with another:

Lord God, bring me out of teen!
(Mother, my mother.)

* * * * *

O mother, where is my lady gone?
(One with another.)

In the bride-chamber she makes sore moan:
(Mother, my mother.)

Her hair falls over the velvet and vair,
(One with another)

Her great soft tears fall over her hair.
(Mother, my mother.)

When he came into the bride's chamber,
(One with another)

Her hands were like pale yellow amber.
(Mother, my mother.)

Her tears made specks in the velvet and
vair,
(One with another)

The seeds of the reeds made specks in her
hair.
(Mother, my mother.)

He kissed her under the gold on her head;
(One with another)

The lids of her eyes were like cold lead.
(Mother, my mother.)

He kissed her under the fall of her chin;
(One with another)

There was right little blood therein.
(Mother, my mother.)

He kissed her under her shoulder sweet;
(One with another)

Her throat was weak, with little heat.
(Mother, my mother.)

He kissed her down by her breast-flowers red,
One with another;
They were like river-flowers dead.
(Mother, my mother.)

What ails you now o' your weeping, wife?
(One with another.)

It ails me sair o' my very life.
(Mother, my mother.)

What ails you now o' your weary ways?
(One with another.)

It ails me sair o' my long life-days.
(Mother, my mother.)

Nay, ye are young, ye are over fair.
(One with another.)

Though I be young, what needs ye care?
(Mother, my mother.)

Nay, ye are fair, ye are over sweet.
(One with another.)

Though I be fair, what needs ye greet?
(Mother, my mother.)

Nay, ye are mine while I hold my life.
(One with another.)

O fool, will ye marry the worm for a wife?
(Mother, my mother.)

Nay, ye are mine while I have my breath.
(One with another.)

O fool, will ye marry the dust of death?
(Mother, my mother.)

Yea, ye are mine, we are handfast wed,
One with another.

Nay, I am no man's; nay, I am dead,
Mother, my mother.

THE WINDS.

O WEARY fa' the east wind,
And weary fa' the west:
And gin I were under the wan waves wide
I wot weel wad I rest.

O weary fa' the north wind,
And weary fa' the south:
The sea went ower my good lord's head
Or ever he kissed my mouth.

Weary fa' the windward rocks,
And weary fa' the lee:
They might hae sunken sevenscore ships,
And let my love's gang free.

And weary fa' ye, mariners a',
And weary fa' the sea:
It might hae taken an hundred men,
And let my ae love be.

A LYKE-WAKE SONG.

FAIR of face, full of pride,
Sit ye down by a dead man's side.

Ye sang songs a' the day:
Sit down at night in the red worm's way.

Proud ye were a' day long:
Ye'll be but lean at evensong.

Ye had gowd kells on your hair:
Nae man kens what ye were.

Ye set scorn by the silken stuff:
Now the grave is clean enough.

Ye set scorn by the rubis ring:
Now the worm is a saft sweet thing.

Fine gold and blithe fair face,
Ye are come to a grimly place.

Gold hair and glad grey een,
Nae man kens if ye have been.

A REIVER'S NECK-VERSE.

SOME die singing, and some die swinging,
And weel mot a' they be:
Some die playing, and some die praying,
And I wot sae winna we, my dear,
And I wot sae winna, we.

Some die sailing, and some die wailing,
And some die fair and free:
Some die flyting, and some die fighting,
But I for a fause love's fee, my dear,
But I for a fause love's fee.

Some die laughing, and some die quaffing,
And some die high on tree:
Some die spinning, and some die sinning,
But faggot and fire for ye, my dear,
Faggot and fire for ye.

Some die weeping, and some die sleeping,
And some die under sea:
Some die gangang, and some die hanging,
And a twine of a tow for me, my dear,
A twine of a tow for me.

THE WITCH-MOTHER.

'O WHERE will ye gang to and where will ye
sleep,
Against the night begins?'
'My bed is made wi' cauld sorrows,
My sheets are lined wi' sins.

'And a sair grief sitting at my foot,
And a sair grief at my head;
And dule to lay me my laigh pillows,
And teen till I be dead.

'And the rain is sair upon my face,
And sair upon my hair;
And the wind upon my weary mouth,
That never may man kiss mair.

'And the snow upon my heavy lips,
'That never shall drink nor eat,
And shame to cledding, and woe to wedding,
And pain to drink and meat.

'But woe be to my bairns' father,
And ever ill fare he:
He has tane a braw bride hame to him,
Cast out my bairns and me.'

'And what shall they have to their marriage
meat
This day they twain are wed?'
'Meat of strong crying, salt of sad sighing,
And God restore the dead.'

'And what shall they have to their wedding
wine
This day they twain are wed?'
'Wine of weeping, and draughts of sleeping,
And God raise up the dead.'

She's tane her to the wild workside,
Between the flood and fell:
She's sought a rede against her need
Of the fiend that bides in hell.

She's tane her to the wan burnside,
She's wrought wi' sang and spell:
She's plighted her soul for doom and dole
To the fiend that bides in hell.

She's set her young son to her breast,
Her auld son to her knee:
Says, 'Weel for you the night, bairnies,
And weel the morn for me.'

She looked fu' lang in their een, sighing,
And sair and sair grat she:
She has slain her young son at her
breast,
Her auld son at her knee.

She's sodden their flesh wi' saft water,
She's mixed their blood with wine:
She's tane her to the braw bride-house,
Where a' were boun' to dine.

She poured the red wine in his cup,
And his een grew fain to greet:
She set the baked meats at his hand,
And bade him drink and eat.

Says, 'Eat your fill of your flesh, my lord,
And drink your fill of your wine,
For a' thing's yours and only yours
That has been yours and mine.'

Says, 'Drink your fill of your wine, my
lord,
And eat your fill of your bread:
I would they were quick in my body again,
Or I that bare them dead.'

He struck her head frae her fair body,
And dead for grief he fell:
And there were twae mair sangs in heaven
And twae mair sauls in hell.

THE BRIDE'S TRAGEDY.

'THE wind wears roun', the day wears down,
The moon is grisly grey;
There's nae man rides by the mirk muir-
sides,
Nor down the dark Tyne's way.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'And winna ye watch the night wi' me,
And winna ye wake the morn?
Foul shame it were that your ae mither
Should brook her ae son's scorn.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'O mither, I may not sleep nor stray,
My weird is ill to dree;
For a fause faint lord of the south seaboard
Wad win my bride of me.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'The winds are strang, and the nights are
lang,
And the ways are sair to ride:
And I maun gang to wreak my wrang,
And ye maun bide and bide.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'Gin I maun bide and bide, Willie,
I wot my weird is sair:
Weel may ye get ye a light love yet,
But never a mither mair.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'O gin the morrow be great wi' sorrow,
The wyte be yours of a':
But though ye slay me that haud and stay me,
'The weird ye will maun fa'.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

When cocks were crawling and day was daw-
ing,
He's boun' him forth to ride:
And the ae first may he's met that day
Was fause Earl Robert's bride.
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

O blithe and braw were the bride-folk a',
But sad and saft rade she;
And sad as doom was her fause bridegroom,
But fair and fain was he.
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'And winna ye bide, sac saft ye ride,
And winna ye speak wi' me?
For mony's the word and the kindly word
I have spoken aft wi' thee.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'My lamp was lit yestreen, Willie,
My window-gate was wide:
But ye camena nigh me till day came by me
And made me not your bride.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

He's set his hand to her bridle-rein,
He's turned her horse away:
And the cry was sair, and the wrath was mair,
And fast and fain rode they.
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

But when they came by Chollerford,
I wot the ways were fell;
For broad and brown the spate swang down,
And the lift was mirk as hell.
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'And will ye ride yon fell water,
Or will ye bide for fear?
Nae scathe ye'll win o' your father's kin,
Though they should slay me here.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'I had liefer ride yon fell water,
Though stange it be to ride,
Than I wad stand on the fair green strand
And thou be slain beside.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'I had liefer swim yon wild water,
Though sair it be to bide,
Than I wad stand at a strange man's hand,
To be a strange man's bride.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

'I had liefer drink yon dark water,
Wi' the stanes to make my bed,
And the faem to hide me, and thou beside me,
Than I wad see thee dead.'
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

He's kissed her twice, he's kissed her thrice,
On cheek and lip and chin:
He's wound her rein to his hand again,
And lightly they leapt in.
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

Their hearts were high to live or die,
Their steeds were stark of limb:
But the stream was starker, the spate was
darker,
Than man might live and swim.
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

The first ae step they strode therein,
It smote them foot and knee:
But ere they wan to the mid water
The spate was as the sea.
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

But when they wan to the mid water,
It smote them hand and head:
And nae man knows but the wave that flows
Where they lie drowned and dead.
In, in, out and in,
Blaws the wind and whirls the whin.

A JACOBITE'S FAREWELL.

1716.

THERE'S nae mair lands to tyne, my deat,
 And nae mair lives to gie:
Though a man think sair to live nae mair,
 There's but one day to die

For a' things come and a' days gane,
 What needs ye rend your hair?
But kiss me till the morn's morrow,
 Then I'll kiss ye nae mair.

O lands are lost and life's losing,
 And what were they to gie?
Fu' mony a man gives all he can,
 But nae man else gives ye.

Our king wons ower the sea's water,
 And I in prison sair:
But I'll win out the morn's morrow,
 And ye'll see me nae mair.

A JACOBITE'S EXILE.

1716.

THE weary day rins down and dies,
 The weary night wears through.
And never an hour is fair wi' flower,
 And never a flower wi' dew.

I would the day were night for me,
 I would the night were day:
For then would I stand in my ain fair land,
 As now in dreams I may.

O lordly flow the Loire and Seine,
 And loud the dark Durance:
But bonnier shine the braes of Tyne
 Than a' the fields of France;
And the waves of Till that speak sae still
 Gleam goodlier where they glance.

O weel were they that fell fighting
 On dark Drumossie's day:
They keep their hame ayont the faem,
 And we die far away.

O sound they sleep, and saft, and deep,
 But night and day wake we;
And ever between the sea-banks green
 Sounds loud the sundering sea.

And ill we sleep, sae sair we weep,
 But sweet and fast sleep they;
And the mool that haps them roun' and laps
 them
Is e'en their country's clay;
But the land we tread that are not dead
 Is strange as night by day.

Strange as night in a strange man's sight,
 Though fair as dawn it be:
For what is here that a stranger's cheer
 Should yet wax blithe to see?

The hills stand steep, the dells lie deep,
 The fields are green and gold:
The hill-streams sing, and the hill-sides ring,
 As ours at home of old.

But hills and flowers are none of ours,
 And ours are overseas:
And the kind strange land whereon we stand,
 It wotsna what were we
Or ever we came, wi' scathe and shame,
 To try what end night be.

Scathe, and shame, and a wae fu' name,
 And a weary time and strange,
Hae they that seeing a weird for dreeing
 Can die, and cannot change.

Shame and scorn may we thole that mourn,
 Though sair be they to dree:
But ill may we bide the thoughts we hide,
 Mair keen than wind and sea.

Ill may we thole the night's watches,
 And ill the weary day:
And the dreams that keep the gates of sleep,
 A wae fu' gift gie they;
For the sangs they sing us, the sights they
 bring us,
 The morn blows all away.

On Aikenshaw the sun blinks braw,
The burn rins blithe and fain:
There's nought wi' me I wadna gie
To look thereon again.

On Kcilder-side the wind blows wide;
There sounds nae hunting-horn
But rings sae sweet as the winds that beat
Round banks where Tyne is born.

The Wansbeck sings with all her springs,
The bents and braes give ear;
But the wood that rings wi' the sang she
sings
I may not see nor hear;
For far and far thae blithe burns are,
And strange is a' thing near.

The light there lightens, the day there bright-
ens,
The loud wind there lives free:
Nae light comes nigh me or wind blows by me
That I wad hear or see.

But O gin I were there again,
Afar ayont the faem,
Cauld and dead in the sweet saft bed
That haps my sires at hame!

We'll see nae mair the sea-banks fair,
And the sweet grey gleaming sky,
And the lordly strand of Northumberland,
And the goodly towers thereby;
And none shall know but the winds that blow
The graves wherein we lie.

THE TYNESIDE WIDOW.

THERE's mony a man loves land and life,
Loves life and land and fee;
And mony a man loves fair women,
But never a man loves me, my love,
But never a man loves me.

O weel and weel for a' lovers,
I wot weel may they be;
And weel and weel for a' fair maidens,
But aye mair woe for me, my love,
But aye mair woe for me.

O weel be wi' you, ye sma' flowers,
Ye flowers and every tree;
And weel be wi' you, a' birdies,
But teen and tears wi' me, my love,
But teen and tears wi' me.

O weel be yours, my three brethren,
And ever weel be ye;
Wi' deeds for doing and loves for wooing,
But never a love for me, my love,
But never a love for me.

And weel be yours, my seven sisters,
And good love-days to see,
And long life-days and true lovers,
But never a day for me, my love,
But never a day for me.

Good times wi' you, ye bauld riders,
By the hieland and the lee;
And by the leeland and by the hieland
It's weary times wi' me, my love,
It's weary times wi' me.

Good days wi' you, ye good sailors,
Sail in and out the sea;
And by the beaches and by the reaches
It's heavy days wi' me, my love,
It's heavy days wi' me.

I had his kiss upon my mouth,
His bairn upon my knee;
I would my soul and body were twain,
And the bairn and the kiss wi' me, my love,
And the bairn and the kiss wi' me.

The bairn down in the mools, my dear,
O saft and saft lies she;
I would the mools were ower my head,
And the young bairn fast wi' me, my love,
And the young bairn fast wi' me.

The father under the faem, my dear,
O sound and sound sleeps he;
I would the faem were ower my face,
And the father lay by me, my love,
And the father lay by me.

I would the faem were ower my face,
Or the mools on my ee-bree;
And waking, time with a' lovers,
But sleeping-time wi' me, my love,
But sleeping-time wi' me.

I would the mools were meat in my
mouth,
The saut faem in my ee;
And the land-worm and the water-worm
To feed fu' sweet on me, my love,
To feed fu' sweet on me.

My life is sealed with a seal of love,
And locked with love for a key;

And I lie wrang and I wake lang,
But ye tak' nae thought for me, my love,
But ye tak' nae thought for me.

We were weel fain of love, my dear,
O fain and fain were we;
It was weel with a' the weary world,
But O, sae weel wi' me, my love,
But O, sae weel wi' me.

We were nane ower mony to sleep, my dear,
I wot we were but three;
And never a bed in the weary world
For my bairn and my dear and me, my love,
For my bairn and my dear and me.

DEDICATION.

THE years are many, the changes more,
Since wind and sun on the wild sweet
shore

Where Joyous Gard stands stark by the
sea
With face as bright as in years of yore

Shone, swept, and sounded, and laughed for
glee

More deep than a man's or a child's may be,
On a day when summer was wild and glad,
And the guests of the wind and the sun were
we.

The light that lightens from seasons clad
With darkness now, is it glad or sad?

Not sad but glad should it shine, mescems,
On eyes yet fain of the joys they had.

For joy was there with us; joy that gleams
And murmurs yet in the world of dreams

Where thought holds fast, as a constant
warder,
The days when I rode by moors and streams,

Reining my rhymes into buoyant order
Through honied leagues of the northland
border.

Though thought or memory fade, and prove
A faithless keeper, a thriftless hoarder,

One landmark never can change remove,
One sign can the years efface not. Love,
More strong than death or than doubt may
be,

Treads down their strengths, and abides
above.

Yea, change and death are his servants: we,
Whom love of the dead links fast, though free.

May smile as they that beheld the dove
Bear home her signal across the sea.

SONGS OF THE SPRINGTIDES.

DEDICATION.

TO EDWARD JOHN TRELAWNY.

*A sea-mew on a sea-king's wrist alighting,
As the north sea-wind caught and strained and curled
The raven-figured flag that led men fighting
From field to green field of the water-world,
Might find such brief high favour at his hand
For wings unbru'd with brine, with foam unpearled,
As these my songs require at yours on land,
That durst not save for love's free sake require,
Being lightly born between the foam and sand,
But reared by hope and memory and desire
Of loves that were and life that is to be,
Even such as filled his heavenlier song with fire
Whose very voice, that sang to set man free,
Was in your ears as ever in ours his lyre,
Once, ere the flame received him from the sea.*

THALASSIUS.

UPON the flowery forefront of the year,
One wandering by the grey-green April sea
Found on a reach of shingle and shallower
sand

Inlaid with starrier glimmering jewellery
Left for the sun's love and the light wind's
cheer

Along the foam-flowered strand
Breeze-brightened, something nearer sea than
land

Though the last shoreward blossom-fringe was
near,

A babe asleep with flower-soft face that gleamed
To sun and seaward as it laughed and dreamed,
Too sure of either love for either's fear,
Albeit so birdlike slight and light, it seemed
Nor man nor mortal child of man, but fair
As even its twin-born tenderer spray-flowers
were,

That the wind scattered like an Oread's hair.

For when July strewed fire on earth and sea
The last time ere that year,
Out of the flame of morn Cymothoe
Beheld one brighter than the sun bright ^{sj} here
Move toward her from its fieriest heart, whence
trod

The live sun's very God,
Across the foam-bright water-ways that are
As heavenlier heavens with star for answering
star,

And on her eyes and hair and maiden mouth
Felt a kiss falling fierier than the South
And heard above afar

A noise of songs and wind enamoured wings
And lutes and lyres of milder and mightier
strings,

And round the resonant radiance of his car
Where depth is one with height,
Light heard as music, music seen as light
And with that second moondawn of the spring's
That fosters the first rose,
A sun-child whiter than the sunlit snows
Was born out of the world of sunless things

That round the round earth flows and ebbs¹
and flows.

But he that found the sea-flower by the
sea

And took to foster like a graft of earth
Was born of man's most highest and heaven-
liest birth,

Free-born as winds and stars and waves are
free ;

A warrior grey with glories more than years,
Though more of years than change the quick
to dead

Had rained their light and darkness on his
head

A singer that in time's and memory's ears
Should leave such words to sing as all his
peers

Might praise with hallowing heat of rapturous
tears

Till all the days of human flight were fled.

And at his knees his fosterling was fed
Not with man's wine and bread
Nor mortal mother-milk of hopes and fears,
But food of deep memorial days long sped ;
For bread with wisdom and with song for wine
Clear as the full calms emerald hyaline.

And from his grave glad lips the boy would
gather

Fine honey of song-notes goldener than gold,
More sweet than bees make of the breathing
heather,

That he, as glad and bold,
Might drink as they, and keep his spirit from
cold.

And the boy loved his laurel-laden hair
As his own father's risen on the eastern air,
And that less white brow-binding bayleaf
bloom

More than all flowers his father's eyes relume ;
And those high songs he heard,
More than all notes of any landward bird,
More than all sounds less free
Than the wind's quiring to the choral sea.

High things the high song taught him ; how
the breath
Too frail for life may be more strong than
death ;
And this poor flash of sense in life, that gleams
As a ghost's glory in dreams,
More stable than the world's own heart's root
seems,
By that strong faith of lordliest love which
gives
To death's own sightless-seeming eyes a light
Clearer, to death's bare bones a verier might.
Than shines or strikes from any man that lives.
How he that loves life overmuch shall die
The dog's death, utterly :
And he that much less loves it than he hates
All wrongdoing that is done
Anywhere always underneath the sun
Shall live a mightier life than time's or fate's.
One fairer thing he shewed him, and in might
More strong than day and night
Whose strengths build up time's towering
period :
Yea, one thing stronger and more high than
God,
Which if man had not, then should God not be :
And that was Liberty.
And gladly should man die to gain, he said,
Freedom ; and gladlier, having lost, lie dead.
For man's earth was not, nor the sweet sea-
waves
His, nor his own land, nor its very graves,
Except they bred not, bore not, hid not slaves :
But all of all that is,
Were one man free in body and soul, were his.
And the song softened, even as heaven by
night
Softens, from sunnier down to starrier light,
And with its moonbright breath
Blessed life for death's sake, and for life's sake
death.
Till as the moon's own beam and breath con-
fuse
In one clear hueless haze of glimmering hues.
The sea's line and the land's line and the sky's,
And light for love of darkness almost dies,
As darkness only lives for light's dear love,
Whose hands the web of night is woven of :
So in that heaven of wondrous words were life
And death brought out of strife ;
Yea, by that strong spell of serene increase
Brought out of strife to peace.

And the song lightened, as the wind at morn
Flashes, and even with lightning of the wind

Night's thick-spun web is thinned
And all its weft unwoven and overworn
Shrinks, as might love from scorn.
And as when wind and light on water and
land
Leap as twin gods from heavenward hand in
hand,
And with the sound and splendor of their leap
Strike darkness dead, and daunt the spirit of
sleep,
And burn it up with fire ;
So with the light that lightened from the lyre
Was all the bright heat in the child's heart
stirred
And blown with blasts of music into flame
Till even his sense became
Fire, as the sense that fires the singing bird
Whose song calls night by name.
And in the soul within the sense began
The manlike passion of a godlike man,
And in the sense within the soul again
Thoughts that make men of gods and gods of
men.

For love the high song taught him : love
that turns
God's heart toward man as man's to Godward (love
That life and death and life are fashioned of,
From the first breath that burns
Half kindled on the flowerlike yearning's lip,
So light and faint that life seems like to slip,
To that yet weaklier drawn
When sunset dies of night's devouring dawn
But the man dying not wholly as all men dies
If aught be left of his in live men's eyes
Out of the dawnless dark of death to rise ;
If aught of deed or word
Be seen for all time or of all time heard.
Love, that though body and soul were over-
thrown
Should live for love's sake of itself alone,
Though spirit and flesh were one thing doom-
ed and dead,
Not wholly annihilated.
Seeing even the hoariest ash-flake that the
pyre
Drops, and forgets the thing was once afire
And gave its heart to feed the pile's full flame
Till its own heart its own heat overcame,
Outlives its own life, though by scarce a span
As such men dying outlive themselves in man,
Outlive themselves for ever ; if the heat
Outburn the heart that kindled it, the sweet
Outlast the flower whose soul it was, and flit

Forth of the body of it
 Into some new shape of a strange perfume
 More potent than its light live spirit of bloom,
 How shall not something of that soul relive,
 That only soul that had such gifts to give
 As lighten something even of all men's doom
 Even from the laboring womb
 Even to the seal set on the unopening tomb?
 And these the loving light of song and love
 Shall wrap and lap round and impend above,
 Imperishable; and all springs born illume
 Their sleep with brighter thoughts than wake
 the dove
 To music, when the hillside winds resume
 The marriage-song of heather-flower and
 broom
 And all the joy thereof.

And hate the song too taught him: hate of all
 That brings or holds in thrall
 Of spirit or flesh, free-born ere God began,
 The holy body and sacred soul of man,
 And wheresoever a curse was or a chain,
 A throne for torment or a crown for bane
 Rose, moulded out of poor men's molten pain,
 There, said he, should man's heaviest hate be
 set
 Inexorably, to faint not or forget
 Till the last warmth bled forth of the last vein
 In flesh that none should call a king's again,
 Seeing wolves and dogs and birds that plague-
 strike air
 Leave the last bone of all the carrion bare.

And hope the high song taught him: hope
 whose eyes
 Can sound the seas unsoundable, the skies
 Inaccessible eyesight; that can see
 What earth beholds not, hear what wind and
 sea
 Hear not, and speak what all these crying in
 one
 Can speak not to the sun.
 For in her sovereign eyelight all things are
 Clear as the closest seen and kindlier star
 That marries morn and even and winter and
 spring
 With one loves golden ring.
 For she can see the days of man, the birth
 Of good and death of evil things on earth
 Inevitable and infinite, and sure
 As present pain is, or herself is pure.
 Yea, she can hear and see, beyond all things
 That lighten from before Time's thunderous
 wings

Through the awful circle of wheel-winged
 periods,
 The tempest of the twilight of all Gods:
 And, higher than all the circling course they
 ran
 The sundawn of the spirit that was man.

And fear the song too taught him; fear to
 be
 Worthless the dear love of the wind and sea
 That bred him fearless, like a sea-mew reared
 In rocks of man's foot feared,
 Where nought of wingless life may sing or
 shine.
 Fear to wax worthless of that heaven he had
 When all the life in all his limbs was glad
 And all the drops in all his veins were wine
 And all the pulses music; when his heart,
 Singing, bade heaven and wind and sea bear
 part
 In one live song's reiteration, and they bore:
 Fear to go crownless of the flower he wore
 When the winds loved him and the waters
 knew,
 The blithest life that clove their blithe life
 through
 With living limbs exultant, or held strife
 More amorous than all dalliance aye anew
 With the bright breath and strength of their
 large life,
 With all strong wrath of all sheer winds that
 blew,
 All glories of all storms of the air that fell
 Prone, ineluctable,
 With roar from heaven of revel, and with hue
 As of heaven turned hell.
 For when the red blast of their breath 'had
 made
 All heaven afush with light more dire than
 shade,
 He felt it in his blood and eyes and hair
 Burn as if all the fires of the earth and air
 Had laid strong hold upon his flesh, and stung
 The soul behind it as with serpent's tongue,
 Forked like the loveliest lightnings: nor could
 bear
 But hardly, half distraught with strong delight,
 The joy that like a garment wrapped him
 round
 And lapped him over and under
 With raiment of great light
 And rapture of great sound
 At every loud leap earthward of the thunder
 From heaven's most furthest bound:
 So seemed all heaven in hearing and in sight,

Alive and mad with glory and angry joy,
That something of its marvellous mirth and
might
Moved even to madness, fledged as even for
flight,
The blood and spirit of one but mortal boy.

So, clothed with love and fear that love
makes great,
And armed with hope and hate,
He set first foot upon the spring-flowered ways
That all feet pass and praise.
And one dim dawn between the winter and
spring,
In the sharp harsh wind harrying heaven and
earth
To put back April that had borne his birth
From sunward on her sunniest shower-struck
wing,
With tears and laughter for the dew-dropt
thing,
Slight as indeed a dew-drop, by the sea
One met him lovelier than all men may be,
God-featured, with God's eyes ; and in their
might
Somewhat that drew men's own to mar their
sight,
Even of all eyes drawn toward him : and his
mouth
Was as the very rose of all men's youth,
One rose of all the rose-beds in the world :
But round his brows the curls were snakes that
curled,
And like his tongue a serpent's ; and his voice
Speaks death, and bids rejoice.
Yet then he spake no word, seeming as dumb,
A dumb thing mild and hurtless ; nor at first
From his bowed eyes seemed any light to
come,
Nor his meek lips for blood or tears to thirst :
But as one blind and mute in mild sweet wise
Pleading for pity of piteous lips and eyes,
He strayed with faint bare lily-lovely feet
Helpless, and flowerlike sweet :
Nor might man see , not having word hereof,
That this of all gods was the great god Love.

And seeing him lovely and like a little child
That weeligh wept for wonder that it smiled
And was so feeble and fearful, with soft speech
The youth bespake him softly ; but there fell
From the sweet lips no sweet word audible
That ear or thought might reach :
No sound to make the dim cold silence glad,

No breath to thaw the hard harsh air with
heat ;
Only the saddest smile of all things sweet,
Only the sweetest smile of all things sad.

And so they went together one green way
Till April dying made free the world for May ;
And on his guide suddenly Love's face turned,
And in his blind eyes burned
Hard light and heat of laughter ; and like
flame
That opens in a mountain's ravening mouth
To blear and sear the sunlight from the south,
His mute mouth opened, and his first word
came :
' Knowest thou me now by name ? '
And all his stature waxed immeasurable,
As of one shadowing heaven and lightening
hell ;
And statelier stood he than a tower that stands
And darkens with its darkness far-off sands
Whereon the sky leans red ;
And with a voice that stilled the winds he said :
' I am he that was thy lord before thy birth,
I am he that is thy lord till thou turn earth :
I make the night more dark, and all the morrow
Dark as the night whose darkness was my
breath :
O fool, my name is sorrow ;
Thou fool, my name is death.'

And he that heard spake not, and looked
right on
Again, and Love was gone.
Through many a night toward many a
wearer day
His spirit bore his body down its way.
Through many a day toward many a wearier
night
His soul sustained his sorrows in her sight.
And earth was bitterer, and heaven, and even
the sea
Sorrowful even as he.
And the wind helped not, and the sun was
dumb ;
And with too long stress of grief to be
His heart grew sore and numb.

And one bright eve ere summer in autumn
sank
At stardawn standing on a grey sea-bank
He felt the wind fitfully shift and heave
As toward a stormier eve ;
And all the wan wide sea shuddered ; and
earth

Shook underfoot as toward some timeless birth,

Intolerable and inevitable ; and all Heaven, darkling, trembled like a stricken thrall.

And far out of the quivering east, and far From past the moonrise and its guiding star, Began a noise of tempest and a light That was not of the lightning ; and a sound Rang with it round and round That was not of the thunder ; and a flight As of blown clouds by night, That was not of them ; and with songs and cries

That sang and shrieked their soul out at the skies A shapeless earthly storm of shapes began From all ways round to move in on the man, Clamorous against him silent ; and their feet Were as the wind's are fleet, And their shrill songs were as wild birds' are sweet.

And as when all the world of earth was wronged

And all the host of all men driven afoam By the red hand of Rome, Round some fierce amphitheatre overthronged With fair clear faces full of bloodier lust Than swells and stings the tiger when his mood

Is fieriest after blood And drunk with trampling of the murderous must

That soaks and stains the tortuous close-coiled wood

Made monstrous with its myriad-mustering brood,

Face by fair face panted and gleamed and pressed,

And breast by passionate breast

Heaved hot with ravenous rapture, as they quaffed

The red ripe full fume of the deep live draught, The sharp quick reek of keen fresh bloodshed, blown

Through the dense deep drift up to the emperor's throne

From the under steaming sands

With clamour of all-applausive throats and hands,

Mingling in mirthful time

With shrill blithe mockeries of the limbed mime :

So from somewhence far forth of the unbeldden,

Dreadfully driven from over and after and under,

Fierce, blown through fifes of brazen blast and golden,

With sound of chiming waves that drown the thunder

Or thunder that strikes dumb the sea's own chimes,

Began the bellowing of the bull-voiced mimes, Terrible ; first bowed down as briars or palms

Even as the breathless blast as of a breeze Fulfilled with clamor and clangor and storms

of psalms ; Red hands rent up the roots of oldworld trees,

Thick flames of torches tossed as tumbling seas

Made mad the moonless and infuriate air That, ravening, revelled in the riotous hair

And raiment of the furred Bassarides.

So came all those in on him ; and his heart, As out of sleep suddenly struck astart,

Danced, and his flesh took fire of theirs, and grief

Was as a last year's leaf

Blown dead far down the wind's way ; and he set

His pale mouth to the brightest mouth it met That laughed for love against his lips, and bade

Follow ; and in following all his blood grew glad

And as again a sea-bird's ; for the wind Took him to bathe him deep round breast and brow

Not as it takes a dead leaf drained and thinned,

But as the brightest bay-flower blown on bough, Set springing toward it singing : and they rode

By many a vine-leaved, many a rose-hung road, Exalt with exultation ; many a night

Set all its stars upon them as for spies On many a moon-bewildering mountain-height

Where he rode only by the fierier light Of his dread lady's hot sweet hungering eyes.

For the moon wandered witless of her way, Spell-stricken by strong magic in such wise

As wizards use to set the stars astray. And in his ears the music that makes mad

Beat always ; and what way the music bade, That always rode he ; nor was any sleep

His, nor from height nor deep. But heaven was as red iron, slumberless,

And had no heart to bless ; And earth lay sere and darkling as distraught.

And help in her was nought.

Then many a midnight, many a morn and even,
His mother, passing forth of her fair heaven,
With goodlier gifts than all save gods can give
From earth or from the heaven where sea-
things live,
With shine of sea-flowers through the bay-
leaf braid
Woven for a crown her foam-white hands had
made
To crown him with land's laurel and sea-dew,
Sought the sea-bird that was her boy : but he
Sat panther-throned beside Erigone,
Riding the red ways of the revel through
Midmost of pale-mouthed passion's crownless
crew.
Till on some winter's dawn of some dim year
He let the vine-bit on the panther's lip
Slide, and the green rein slip,
And set his eyes to seaward, nor gave ear
If sound from landward hailed him, dire or
dear ;
And passing forth of all those fair fierce ranks
Back to the grey sea-banks,
Against a sea-rock lying, aslant the steep,
Fell after many sleepless dreams on sleep.

And in his sleep the dun green light was
shed
Heavily round his head
That through the veil of sea falls fathom-deep,
Blurred like a lamp's that when the night
drops dead
Dies ; and his eyes gat grace of sleep to see
The deep divine dark dayshine of the sea,
Dense water-walls and clear dusk water-ways,
Broad-based, or branching as a sea-flower
sprays
That side or this dividing ; and anew
The glory of all her glories that he knew.
And in sharp rapture of recovering tears
He woke on fire with yearnings of old years,
Pure as one purged of pain that passion bore,
Ill child of bitter mother ; for his own
Looked laughing toward him from her midsea
throne,
Up toward him there ashore.

Thence in his heart the great same joy be-
gan,
Of child that made him man :
And turned again from all hearts else on quest,
He communed with his own heart, and had
rest.

And like sea-winds upon loud waters ran
His days and dreams together, till the joy
Burned in him of the boy.
Till the earth's great comfort and the sweet
sea's breath
Breathed and blew life in where was heartless
death,
Death spirit-stricken of soul-sick days, where
strife
Of thought and flesh made mock of death and
life.
And grace returned upon him of his birth
Where heaven was mixed with heavenlike sea
and earth ;
And song shot forth strong wings that took the
sun
From inward, fledged with might of sorrow
and mirth
And father's fire made mortal in his son.
Nor was not spirit of strength in blast and
breeze
To exalt again the sun's child and the sea's ;
For as wild mares in Thessaly grow great
With child of ravishing winds, that violate
Their leaping length of limb with manes like
fire
And eyes outburning heaven's
With fires more violent than the lightning
levin's
And breath drained out and desperate of desire,
Even so the spirit in him, when winds grew
strong,
Grew great with child of song,
Nor less than when his veins first leapt for joy
To draw delight in such as burns a boy,
Now too the soul of all his senses felt
The passionate pride of deep sea-pulses dealt
Through nerve and jubilant vein
As from the love and largess of old time,
And with his heart again
The tidal throb of all the tides keep rhyme
And charm him from his own soul's separate
sense
With infinite and invasive influence
That made strength sweet in him and sweet-
ness strong,
Being now no more a singer, but a song.
Till one clear day when brighter sea-wind
blew
And louder sea-shine lightened, for the waves
Were full of godhead and the light that saves,
His father's, and their spirit had pierced him
through,
He felt strange breath and light all round him
shed

That bowed him down with rapture ; and he
knew
His father's hand, hallowing his humbled head,
And the old great voice of the old good time,
that said :

' Child of my sunlight and the sea, from
birth
A fosterling and fugitive on earth ;
Sleepless of soul as wind or wave or fire,
A manchild with an ungrown God's desire ;
Because thou hast loved nought mortal more
than me,
Thy father, and thy mother-hearted sea ;
Because thou hast set thine heart to sing, and
soul

Life and life's love for song, God's living gold ;
Because thou hast given thy flower and fire of
youth
To feed men's hearts with visions, truer than
truth ;
Because thou hast kept in those world-wander-
ing eyes
The light that makes me music of the skies ;
Because thou hast heard with world-unwearied
ears
The music that puts light into the spheres ;
Have therefore in thine heart and in thy mouth
The sound of song that mingles north and
south,
The song of all the winds that sing of me,
And in thy soul the sense of all the sea.'

ON THE CLIFFS.

ἡμερόφωνος ἀηδὼν.

SAPPHO.

BETWEEN the moondawn and the sundown
here

The twilight hangs half starless ; half the sea
Still quivers as for love or pain or fear
Or pleasure mightier than these all may be
A man's live heart might beat

Wherein a God's with mortal blood should
meet

And fill its pulse too full to bear the strain
With fear or love or pleasure's twin-born, pain.
Fiercely the gaunt woods to the grim soil cling
That bears for all fair fruits

Wan wild sparse flowers of windy and wintry
spring

Between the tortive serpent-shapen roots
Wherethrough their dim growth hardly strikes
and shoots

And shews one gracious thing
Hardly, to speak for summer one sweet word
Of summer's ☿ If scarce heard.

But higher steep green sterile fields, thick-
set

With flowerless hawthorn even to the upward
verge

Whence the woods gathering watch new cliffs
emerge

Higher than their highest of crowns that sea-
winds fret,

Hold fast, for all that night or wind can say,
Some pale pure colour yet,

Too dim for green and luminous for grey.

Between the climbing inland cliffs above
And these beneath that breast and break the
bay,

A barren peace to soft for hate or love
Broods on an hour to dim for night or day.

O wind, O wingless wind that walk'st the sea,
Weak wind, wing-broken, wearier wind than we,
Who are yet not spirit-broken, maimed like
thee

Who wait not in our inward night as thou
In the outer darkness now,

What word has the old sea given thee for mine
ear

From thy faint lips to hear ?

For some word would she send me, knowing
not how.

Nay, what far other word

Than ever of her was spoken, or of me
Or all my winged white kinsfolk of the sea
Between fresh wave and wave was ever heard,
Cleaves the clear dark enwinding tree with
tree

Too close for stars to separate and to see
Enmeshed in multitudinous unity ?
What voice of what strong God hath stormed
and stirred

The fortress'd rock of silence, rent apart
Even to the core Night's all maternal heart ?
What voice of God grown heavenlier in a bird,
Make keener of edge to smite

Than lightning,—yea, thou knowest, O mother
Night,
Keen as that cry from thy strange children
sent

Wherewith the Athenian judgment-shrine was
rent,

For wrath that all their wrath was vainly spent,
Their wrath for wrong made right
By justice in her own divine despite
That bade pass forth unblamed

The sinless matricide and unashamed ?
Yea, what new cry is this, what note more
bright

Than their song's wing of words was dark of
flight,

What word is this thou hast heard,
Thine and not thine or theirs, O Night, what
word

More keen than lightning and more sweet than
light ?

As all men's hearts grew godlike in one bird
And all those hearts cried on thee, crying with
might,

Hear us, O mother Night !

Dumb is the mouth of darkness as of death :
Light, sound and life are one
In the eyes and lips of dawn that draw the sun
To hear what first child's word with glimmer-
ing breath

Their weak wan weanling child the twilight
saith ;

But night makes answer none.

God, if thou be god.—bird, if bird thou be,—
Do thou then answer me.

For but one word, what wind soever blow,

Is blown up usward ever from the sea.

In fruitless years of youth dead long ago
And deep beneath their own dead leaves and
snow

Buried, I heard with bitter heart and sere
The same sea's word unchangeable, nor knew
But that mine own life-days were changeless
too

And sharp and salt with unshed tear on tear
And cold and fierce and barren ; and my
soul,

Sickening, swam weakly with bated breath
In a deep sea like death,
And felt the wind buffet her face with brine
Hard, and harsh thought on thought in long
bleak roll

Blown by keen gusts of memory sad as thine
Heap the weight up of pain, and break, and
leave

Strength scarce enough to grieve
In the sick heavy spirit, unmanned with strife
Of waves that beat at the tired lips of life.

Nay, sad may be man's memory, sad may be
The dream he weaves him as for shadow of
thee,

But scarce one breathing-space, one heartbeat
long,

Wilt thou take shadow of sadness on thy song.
Not thou, being more than man or man's desire,
Being bird and God in one,
With throat of gold and spirit of the sun ;
The sun whom all our souls and songs call sire,
Whose godhead gave thee, chosen of all our
quire,

Thee only of all that serve, of all that sing
Before our sire and king,
Borne up some space on time's world-wander-
ing wing,

This gift, this doom, to bear till time's wing
tire—

Life everlasting of eternal fire.

Thee only of all ; yet can no memory say
How many a night and day
My heart has been as thy heart, and my life
As thy life is, a sleepless hidden thing,
Full of the thirst and hunger of winter and
spring,

That seeks its food not in such love or strife
As fill men's hearts with passionate hours and
rest.

From no loved lips and on no loving breast
Have I sought ever for such gifts as bring
Comfort, to stay the secret soul with sleep.

The joys, the loves, the labors, whence men
reap

Rathe fruit of hopes and fears,
I have made not mine; the best of all my
days

Have been as those fair fruitless summer stray,
Those water-waifs that but the sea-wind steers,
Flakes of glad foam or flowers on footless ways
That take the wind in season and the sun,
And when the wind wills is their season done.

For all my days as all thy days from birth
My heart as thy heart was in me as thee,
Fire; and not all the fountains of the sea
Have waves enough to quench it, nor on earth
Is fuel enough to feed,
While day sows night and night sows day for
seed.

We were not marked for sorrow, thou nor I,
For joy nor sorrow, sister, were we made,
To take delight and grief to live and die,
Assuaged by pleasures or by pains affrayed
That melt men's hearts and alter; we retain
A memory mastering pleasure and all pain,
A spirit within the sense of ear and eye,
A soul behind the soul, that seeks and sings
And makes our life move only with its wings
And feed but from its lips, that in return
Feed of our hearts wherein the old fires that
burn

Have strength not to consume
Nor glory enough to exalt us past our doom.

Ah, ah, the doom (thou knowest whence rang
that wail)

Of the shrill nightingale!
(From whose wild lips, thou knowest, that
wail was thrown)

*For round about her have the great gods cast
A wing-borne body, and clothed her close and
fast*

With a sweet life that hath no part in mourn.
But me, for me (how hadst thou heart to hear?)
Remains a sundering with the two-edged spear.

Ah, for her doom! so cried in presage then
The bodiful bonds slave of the king of men,
And might not win her will.
Too close the entangling dragnet woven of
crime,

The snare of ill new-born of elder ill,
The curse of new time for an elder time,
Had caught, and held her yet,
Enmeshed intolerably in the intolerant net,

Who thought with craft to mock the God most
high,

And win by wiles his crown of prophecy
From the Sun's hand sublime,
As God were man, to spare or to forget,

But thou,—the gods have given thee and for-
given thee

More than our master gave
That strange-eyed spirit-wounded strange-ton-
gued slave

There questing houndlike where the roofs red-
wet

Reeked as a wet red grave.

Life everlasting has their strange grace given
thee,

Even hers whom thou wast wont to sing and
serve

With eyes, but not with song, too swift to
swerve;

Yet might not even thine eyes estranged estrange
her,

Who seeing thee too, but inly, burn and bleed
Like that pale princess-priest of Priam's seed,
For stranger service gave thee guerdon, stranger
If this indeed be guerdon, this indeed

Her mercy, this thy meed—

That thou, being more than all we born, being
higher

Than all heads crowned of him that only gives
The light whereby man lives,

The bay that bids man moved of God's
desire

Lay hand on lute or lyre,

Set lip to trumpet or deflowered green reed—

If this were given thee for a grace indeed,
That thou, being first of all these, thou alone

Shouldst have the grace to die not, but to live
And loose nor change one pulse of song, one
tone

Of all that were thy lady's and thine own,
Thy lady's whom thou criest on to forgive,

Thou, priest and sacrifice on the altar-stone
Where none may worship not of all that live,

Love's priestess, errant on dark ways diverse;
If this were grace indeed for Love to give,

If this indeed were blessing and no curse.

Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy of
song,

Song's priestess, mad with joy and pain of
love,

Name above all names that are lights above,
We have loved, praised, pitied, crowned and
done thee wrong,

O thou past praise and pity ; thou the sole
Utterly deathless, perfect only and whole
Immortal, body and soul.
For over all whom time hath overpast
The shadow of sleep inexorable is cast,
The implacable sweet shadow of perfect sleep
That gives not back what life gives death to
keep ;

Yea, all that lived and loved and sang and
sinned

Are all borne down death's cold sweet sound-
less wind

That blows all night and knows not whom its
breath,

Darkling, may touch to death :

But one that wind hath touched and changed
not,—one

Whose body and soul are parcel of the sun ;
One that earth's fire could burn not, nor the
sea

Quench ; nor might human doom take hold on
thee ;

All praise, all pity, all dreams have done thee
wrong,

All love, with eyes love-blinded from above ;
Song's priestess, mad with joy and pain of love,
Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy of
song.

Hast thou none other answer then for me
Than the air may have of thee,

Or the earth's warm woodlands girdling with
green girth

Thy secret sleepless burning life on earth,

Or even the sea that once, being woman
crowned

And girt with fire and glory of anguish round,
Thou wert so fain to seek to, fain to crave

If she would hear thee and save

And give thee comfort of thy great green grave ?
Because I have known thee always who thou
art,

Thou knowest, have known thee to thy heart's
own heart,

Nor ever have given light ear to storied song
That did thy sweet name sweet unwitting

wrong,
Nor ever have called thee nor would call for
shame,

Thou knowest, but inly by thine only name,
Sappho—because I have known thee and lov-
ed, hast thou

None other answer now ?

As brother and sister were we, child and bird,
Since thy first Lesbian word

Flamed on me, and I knew not whence I knew
This was the song that struck my whole soul
through,

Pierced my keen spirit of sense with edge more
keen,

Even when I knew not,—even ere sooth was
seen,—

When thou was but the tawny sweet winged
thing

Whose cry was but of spring.

And yet even so thine ear should hear me—
yea,

Hear me this nightfall by this northland bay,

Even for their sake whose loud good word I
had,

Singing of thee in the all-beloved clime

Once, where the windy wine of spring makes
mad

Our sisters of Majano, who kept time

Clear to my choral rhyme.

Yet was the song acclaimed of these aloud

Whose praise had made mute humbleness mis-
proud,

The song with answering song applauded thus,
But of that Daulian dream of Itylus.

So but for love's love haply was it—nay,

How else?—that even their song took my
song's part,

For love of love and sweetness of sweet heart,
(Or god-given glorious madness of mid May

And heat of heart and hunger and thirst to
sing,

Full of the new wine of the wind of spring.

Or if this were not, and it be not sin

To hold myself in spirit of thy sweet kin,

In heart and spirit of song ;

If this my great love do thy grace no wrong.

Thy grace that gave me grace to dwell therein ;

If thy gods thus be my gods, and their will

Made my song part of thy song—even such
part

As man's hath of God's heart—

And my life like as thy life to fulfil ;

What have our gods then given us ? Ah, to
thee,

Sister, much more, much happier than to me,
Much happier things they have given, and
more of grace

Than falls to man's light race ;

For lighter are we, all our love and pain

Lighter than thine, who knowest of time or
place

Thus much, that place nor time

Can heal or hurt or lull or change again
The singing soul that makes his soul sublime
Who hears the far fall of its fire-fledged rhyme
Fill darkness as with bright and burning rain
Till all the live gloom inly glows, and light
Seems with the sound to cleave the core of
night.

The singing soul that moves thee, and that
moved

When thou wast woman, and their songs divine
Who mixed for Grecian mouths heaven's lyric
wine

Fell dumb, fell down reproved
Before one sovereign Lesbian song of thine.
That soul, though love and life had fain held
fast,

Wind-winged with fiery music, rose and past
Through the indrawn hollow of earth and
heaven and hell,

As through some strait sea-shell
The wide sea's immemorial song,—the sea
That sings and breathes in strange men's ears
of thee

How in her barren bride-bed, void and vast,
Even thy soul sang itself to sleep at last.

To sleep? Ah, then, what song is this, that
here

Makes all the night one ear,
One ear fulfilled and mad with music, one
Heart kindling as the heart of heaven, to hear
A song more fiery than the awakening sun
Sings, when his song sets fire
To the air and clouds that build the dead
night's pyre?

*O thou of divers-coloured mind, O thou
Deathless, God's daughter subtle-souled—lo,*
now,

Now to the song above all songs, in flight
Higher than the day-star's height, [night!
And sweet as sound the moving wings of
Thou of the divers-coloured seat—behold,
Her very song of old!—

O deathless, O God's daughter subtle-souled!
That same cry through this boskage overhead
Rings round reiterated,
Palpitates as the last palpitated,
The last that panted through her lips and died
Not down this grey north sea's half sapped
cliff-side

That crumbles toward the coastline, year by
year

More near the sands and near;
The last loud lyric fiery cry she cried, [here.
Heard once on heights Leucadian,—heard not

Not here; for this that fires our northland
This is the song that made [night,
Love fearful, even the heart of love afraid,
With the great anguish of its great delight.
No swan-song, no far-fluttering half-drawn
breath,

No word that love of love's sweet nature saith,
No dirge that lulls the narrowing lids of death,
No healing hymn of peace-prevented strife,—
This is her song of life.

*I loved thee,—hark, one tenderer note than
all—*

*Atthis, of old time, once—one low long fall,
Sighing—one long low lovely loveless call,
Dying—one pause in song so flamelike fast—
Atthis, long since in old time overpast—
One soft first pause and last.*

One,—then the old rage of rapture's fieriest
rain
Storms all the music-maddened night again.

*Child of God, close craftswoman, I beseech thee
Bid not ache nor agony break nor master,*

*Lady, my spirit—
O thou her mistress, might her cry not reach
thee?*

Our Lady of all men's loves, could Love go
past her,
Pass, and not hear it?

She hears not as she heard not; hears not me,
O treble-natured mystery,—how should she
Hear, or give ear?—who heard and heard not
thee;

Heard, and went past, and heard not; but all
time

Hears all that all the ravin of his years
Hath cast not wholly out of all men's ears
And dilled to death with deep dense funeral
chime

Of their reiterate rhyme.

And now of all songs uttering all her praise,
All hers who had thy praise and did thee
wrong,

Abides one song yet of her lyric days,
Thine only, this thy song.

O soul triune, woman and god and bird,
Man, man at least has heard.

All ages call thee conqueror, and thy cry
The mightiest as the least beneath the sky
Whose heart was ever set to song, or stirred
With wind of mounting music blown more high
Than wildest wing may fly,

Hath heard or hears,—even Æschylus as I.
But when thy name was woman, and thy word

Human,—then haply, surely then meseems
This thy bird's note was heard on earth of
none,

Of none save only in dreams.

In all the world then surely was but one
Song ; as in heaven at highest one sceptred sun
Regent, on earth here surely without fail
One only, one imperious nightingale.

Dumb was the field, the woodland mute, the
lawn

Silent ; the hill was tongueless as the vale
Even when the last fair waif of cloud that felt
Its heart beneath the coloring moonrays melt,
At high midnoon of midnight half withdrawn,
Bared all the sudden deep divine moondawn.
Then, unsaluted by her twin-born tune,
That latter timeless morning of the moon
Rose past its hour of moonrise ; clouds gave
way

To the old reconquering ray,
But no song answering made it more than day ;
No cry of song by night
Shot fire into the cloud-constraining light.
One only, one Æolian island heard
Thrill, but through no bird's throat,
In one strange manlike maiden's godlike note,
The song of all these as a single bird.
Till the sea's portal was as funeral gate
For that sole singer in all time's ageless date
Singed and signed for so triumphal fate,
All nightingales but one in all the world
All her sweet life were silent ; only then,
When her life's wing of womanhood was furled,
Their cry, this cry of thine was heard again,
As of me now, of any born of men.

Through sleepless clear spring nights filled full
of thee,

Rekindled here, thy ruling song has thrilled
The deep dark air and subtle tender sea
And breathless hearts with one bright sound
fulfilled.

Or at midnoon to me

Swimming, and birds about my happier head
Skimming, one smooth soft way by water and
air,

To these my bright born brethren and to me

Hath not the clear wind borne or seemed to
bear

A song wherein all earth and heaven and sea
Were molten in one music made of thee
To enforce us, O our sister of the shore,
Look once in heart back landward and adore ?
For songless were we sea-mews, yet had we
More joy than all things joyful of thee—more,
Haply, than all things happiest ; nay, save thee,
In thy strong rapture of imperious joy
Too high for heart of sea-borne bird or boy,
What living things were happiest if not we ?
But knowing not love nor change nor wrath
nor wrong,
No more we knew of song.

Song, and the secrets of it, and their might,
What blessings curse it and what curses bless,
I know them since my spirit had first in sight,
Clear as thy song's words or the live sun's
light,

The small dark body's Lesbian loveliness
That held the fire eternal ; eye and ear
Were as a god's to see, a god's to hear,
Through all his hours of daily and nightly
chime,

The sundering of the two-edged spear of time :
The spear that pierces even the sevenfold
shields

Of mightiest Memory, mother of all songs
made,
And wastes all songs as roseleaves kissed and
frayed

As here the harvest of the foam-flowered fields ;
But thine the spear may waste not that he
wields

Since first the God whose soul is man's live
breath,

The sun whose face hath our sun's face for
shade,

Put all the light of life and love and death
Too strong for life, but not for love too strong,
Where pain makes peace with pleasure in thy
song,

And in thine heart, where love and song make
strife,

Fire everlasting of eternal life.

THE GARDEN OF CYMODOCE.

SEA, and bright wind, and heaven of ardent
 air,
 More dear than all things earth-born ; O to
 me
 Mother more dear than love's own longing,
 sea,

More than love's eyes are, fair,
 Be with my spirit of song as wings to bear,
 As fire to feel and breathe and brighten ; be
 A spirit of sense more deep of deity,
 A light of love, if love may be, more strong
 In me than very song.

For song I have loved with second love, but
 thee,

Thee first, thee, mother ; ere my songs had
 breath,

That love of loves, whose bondage makes man
 free,

Was in me strong as death.

And seeing no slave may love thee, no, not
 one

That loves not freedom more,
 And more for thy sake loves her, and for hers.

Thee : or that hates not, on whate'er thy shore
 Or what thy wave soever, all things done

Of man beneath the sun

In his despite and thine, to cross and curse
 Your light and song that as with lamp and
 verse

Guide safe the strength of our sphered universe,
 Thy breath it was, thou knowest, and none

but thine,
 That taught me love of one thing more divine.

Ah, yet my youth was old,
 Its first years dead and cold
 As last year's autumn's gold,

And all my spirit of singing sick and sad and
 sere,

Or ever I might behold
 The fairest of thy fold
 Engirt, enringed, enrolled,

In all thy flower-sweet flock of islands dear
 and near.

Yet in my heart I deemed
 The fairest things, meseemed,
 Truth, dreaming, ever dreamed,

I had made mine eyes already like a god's to
 see :

Of all sea-things that were
 Clothed on with water and air,
 That none could live more fair

Than thy sweet love long since had shown for
 love to me.

I knew not, mother of mine,
 That one birth more divine
 Than all births else of thine

That hang like flowers or jewels on thy deep
 soft breast

Was left for me to shine
 Above thy girlling line
 Of bright and breathing brine,

To take mine eyes with rapture and my sense
 with rest.

That this was left for me,
 Mother, to have of thee,
 To touch, to taste, to see,

To feel as fire fulfilling all my blood and breath,
 As wine of living fire

Keen as the heart's desire

That makes the heart its pyre

And on its burning visions burns itself to death.

For here of all thy waters, here of all

Thy windy ways the wildest, and beset

As some beleaguered city's war-bereached wall
 With deaths enmeshed all round it in deep net,

Thick sown with rocks deadlier than steel, and
 fierce

With loud cross-countering currents, where
 the ship

Flags, flickering like a wind-bewildered leaf,
 The densest weft of waves that prow may

pierce
 Coils round the sharpest warp of shoals that
 dip

Suddenly, scarce well under for one brief
 Keen breathing space between the streams

adverse,
 Scarce showing the fanged edge of one hung-
 ering lip

Or one tooth lipless of the ravening reef ;
 And midst of the murderous water's web

All around it stretched and spun,
Laughs, reckless of rough tide and raging ebb
The loveliest thing that shines against the sun.

O flower of all wind-flowers and sea-flowers,
Made lovelier by love of the sea
Than thy golden own field-flowers, or tree-
flowers

Like foam of the sea-facing tree !
No foot but the sea-mew's there settles
On the spikes of thine anthers like horns,
With snow-colored spray for thy petals,
Black rocks for thy thorns.

Was it here, in the waste of his waters,
That the lordly north wind, when his love
On the fairest of many king's daughters
Bore down for a spoil from above,
Chose forth of all farthest far islands,
As a haven to harbor her head,
Of all lowlands on earth and all highlands,
His bride-worthy bed ?

Or haply, my sea-flower, he found thee
Made fast as with anchors to land,
And broke, that his waves might be round
thee,
Thy fetters like rivets of sand ?
And afar by the blast of him drifted
Thy blossom of beauty was borne,
As a lark by the heart in her lifted
To mix with the morn ?

By what rapture of rage, by what vision
Of a heavenlier heaven than above,
Was he moved to devise thy divison
From the land as a rest for his love ?
As a nest when his wings would remeasure
The ways were of old they would be,
As a bride-bed upbuilt for his pleasure
By sea-rock and sea ?

For in no deeps of midmost inland May
More flower-bright flowers the hawthorn, or
more sweet
Swell the wild gold of the earth for wander-
ing feet ;
For on no northland way
Crowds the close whin-bloom closer, set like
thee
With thorns about for fangs of sea-rock shown
Through blithe lips of the bitter brine to lee ;
Nor blithelier landward comes the sea-wind
blown,
Nor blithelier leaps the land-wind back to sea :

Nor louder springs the living song of birds
To shame our sweetest words.
And in the narrowest of thine hollowest hold
For joy thine aspens quiver as though for gold,
And many a self-lit flower-illumined tree
Outlaughs with snow-bright or with rose-bright
glee

The laughter of the fields whose laugh is gold.
Yea, even from depth to height,
Even thine own beauty with its own delight
Fulfills thine heart in thee an hundredfold
Beyond the larger hearts of islands bright
With less intense contraction of desire
Self-satiate, centred in its own deep fire ;
Of shores not self-enchanted and entranced
By heavenly severance from all shadow of mirth
Or mourning upon earth ;
As thou, by no similitude enhanced,
By no fair foil made fairer, but alone
Fair as could be no beauty save thine own,
And wondrous as no world-beholden wonder :
Throned, with the world's most perilous sea
for throne,
And praised from all its choral throats of
thunder.

Yet one praise hast thou, holier
Then praise of theirs may be,
To exalt thee, wert thou lowlier
Than all that take the sea
With shores whence waves ebb slower
Than these fall off from thee :

That One, whose name gives glory,
One man whose life makes light,
One crowned and throned in story
Above all empire's height,
Came, where thy straits run hoary,
To hold thee fast in sight ;

With hallowing eyes to hold thee,
With rapturous heart to read,
To encompass and enfold thee
With love whence all men feed,
To brighten and behold thee,
Who is mightiest of man's seed :
More strong than strong disaster,
For fate and fear too strong ;
Earth's friend, whose eyes look past her,
Whose hands would purge of wrong ;
Our lord, our light, our master,
Whose word sums up all song.

Be it April or September
That plays his perfect part,
Burn June or blow December,

Thou canst not in thine heart
But rapturously remember,
All heavenlike as thou art,

Whose footfall made thee fairer,
Whose passage more divine,
Whose hand, our thunder-bearer,
Held fire that bade thee shine
With subtler glory and rarer
Than thrills the sun's own shrine.

Who knows how then his godlike banished gaze
Turned haply from its goal of natural days
And homeward hunger for the clear French
clime,

Toward English earth, whereunder now the
Accursed

Rots, in the hate of all men's hearts inhearsed,
A carrion ranker to the sense of time
For that sepulchral gift of stone and lime
By royal grace laid on it, less of weight
Than the load laid by fate,
Fate, misbegotten child of his own crime,
Son of as foul a bastard-bearing birth
As even his own on earth ;

Less heavy than the load of cursing piled
By loyal grace of all souls undefiled
On one man's head, whose reeking soul made
rotten

The loathed live corpse on earth once misbe-
gotten ?

But when our Master's homeless feet were here,
France yet was foul with joy more foul than
fear,
And slavery chosen, more vile by choice of
chance

Than dull damnation of inheritance
From Russian year to year.

Alas fair mother of men, alas my France,
What ailed thee so to fall, that wert so dear
For all men's sake to all men, in such trance,
Plague-stricken ? Had the very Gods, that
saw

Thy glory lighten on us for a law,
Thy gospel glow before us for a guide,
Had these waxed envious of our love and awe
Or was it less their envy than thy pride
That bared thy breast for the obscene vulture-
claw,

High priestess, by whose mouth Love prophe-
sied

That fate should yet mean freedom ? Howso-
ever,

That hour, the helper of men's hearts, we
praise,

Which blots out of man's book of after days
The name above all names abhorred for ever.
And His name shall we praise not, whom these
flowers,

These rocks and ravening waters bound for
girth

Round this wild starry spanlong plot of earth,
Beheld, the mightier for those heavier hours
That bowed his heart not down
Nor marred one crowning blossom of his
crown ?

For surely, might we say,
Even from the dark deep sea-gate that makes
way

Through channelled darkness for the darkling
day

Hardly to let men's faltering footfall win

The sunless passage in,
Where breaks a world aflower against the sun,
A small sweet world of wave-encompassed
wonders,

Kept from the wearier landward world asunder
With violence of wild waters, and with thunder
Of many winds as one,

To where the keen sea-current grinds and frets
The black bright sheer twin flameless Altarlets
That lack no live blood-sacrifice they crave
Of shipwreck and the shrine-subservient wave,
Having for priest the storm-wind, and for choir
Lightnings and clouds whose prayers and
praise are fire,

All the isle acclaimed him coming ; she, the
least

Of all things loveliest that the sea's love hides
From strange men's insult, walled about with
tides

That bid strange guests back from her flower-
strewn feast,

Set all her fields aflower, her flowers aflame,
To applaud him that he came.

Nor surely flashed not something of delight
Through that steep strait of rock whose twin-
cliffed height

Links crag with crag reiterate, land with land,
By one sheer thread of narrowing precipice
Bifront, that binds and sunders
Abyss from hollower imminent abyss

And wilder isle with island, blind for bliss
Of sea that lightens and of wind that thunders ;
Nor pealed not surely back from deep to steep
Reverberate acclamation, steep to deep

Inveterately reclaiming and replying
Praise, and response applause ; nor the sea,
For all the sea-wind's crying,

Knew not the song her sister, even as she

Thundering, or like her confluent spring-tides
 brightening,
 And like her darkness lightening ;
 The song that moved about him silent, now
 Both soundless wings refolded and refurled
 On that Promethean brow,
 Then quivering as for flight that wakes the
 world.

From the roots of the rocks underlying the
 gulfs that engird it around
 Was the isle not enkindled with light of him
 landing, or thrilled not with sound ?
 Yea, surely the sea like a harper laid hand on
 the shore as a lyre,
 As the lyre in his own for a birthright of old
 that was given of his sire,
 And the hand of the child was put forth on
 the chords yet alive and aflame
 From the land of the God that had wrought it
 in heaven ; and the hand was the same.
 And the tongue of the child spake, singing ;
 and never a note that he sang,
 But the strings made answer unstricken, as
 though for the God they rang.
 And the eyes of the child shone, lightening ;
 and touched as by life at his nod,
 They shuddered with music, and quickened as
 though from the glance of the God.
 So trembled the heart of the hills and the
 rocks to receive him, and yearned
 With desirous delight of his presence and love
 that beholding him burned.
 Yea, down through the mighty twin hollows
 where never the sunlight shall be,
 Deep sunk under imminent earth, and subdued
 to the stress of the sea,
 That feel when the dim week changes by change
 of their tides in the dark,
 As the wave sinks under within them, reluctant,
 removed from its mark,
 Even there in the terror of twilight in bloom
 with its blossoms ablush,
 Did a sense of him touch not the gleam of their
 flowers with a fierier flush ?
 Though the sun they behold not for ever, yet
 knew they not over them One
 Whose soul was the soul of the morning, whose
 song was the song of the sun ?
 But the secrets inviolate of sunlight in hollows
 untrudged of day,
 Shall he dream what are these who behold
 not ? or he that hath seen, shall he say ?
 For the path is for passage of sea-mews ; and
 he that hath glided and leapt

Over sea-grass and sea-rock, alighting as one
 from a citadel crept
 That his foemen beleaguer, descending by
 darkness and stealth, at the last
 Peers under, and all is as hollow to hellward,
 agape and aghast.
 But afloat and afar in the darkness a tremulous
 color subsides
 From the crimson high crest of the purple-
 peaked roof to the soft-colored sides
 That brighten as ever they widen till downward
 the level is won
 Of the soundless and colorless water that
 knows not the sense of the sun :
 From the crown of the culminant arch to the
 floor of the lakelet abloom,
 One infinite blossom of blossoms innumerable
 aflush through the gloom.
 All under the deeps of the darkness are glim-
 mering ; all over impends
 An immeasurable infinite flower of the dark
 that dilates and descends,
 That exults and expands in its breathless and
 blind efflorescence of heart
 As it broadens and bows to the wave-ward,
 and breathes not, and hearkens apart.
 As a beaker inverse at a feast on Olympus, ex-
 hausted of wine,
 But inlaid as with rose from the lips of Dione
 that left it divine :
 From the lips everliving of laughter and love
 everlasting, that leave
 In the cleft of his heart who shall kiss them a
 snake to corrode it and cleave.
 So glimmers the gloom into glory, the glory
 recoils into gloom
 That the eye of the sun could not kindle, the
 lip not of Love could relume.
 So darkens reverted the cup that the kiss of her
 mouth set on fire :
 So blackens a brand in his eyeshot as moulder
 awhile from the pyre.
 From the beam from beneath and without it
 refrangent again from the wave
 Strikes up through the portal a ghostly reverse
 on the dome of the cave,
 On the depth of the dome ever darkling and
 dim to the crown of its arc :
 That the sun-colored tapestry, sunless for ever,
 may soften the dark.
 But within through the side-seen archway
 aglimmer again from the right
 Is the seal of the sea's tide set on the mouth
 of the mystery of night.
 And the seal on the seventh day breaks but a
 little, that man by its mean

May behold what the sun hath not looked on,
the stars of the night have not seen.

Even like that hollow-bosomed rose, inverse
And infinite, the heaven of thy vast verse,
Our Master, over all our souls impends,
Imminent ; we, with heart-enkindled eyes
Upwondering, search the music-moulded skies
Sphere by sweet sphere, concordant as it blends
Light of bright sound, sound of clear light, in

one,
As all the stars found utterance through the
sun.

And all that heaven is like a rose in bloom,
Flower-colored, where its own sun's fires
illumine

As from one central and imperious heart
The whole sky's every part :
But lightening still and darkling downward,
lo

The light and darkness of it,
The leaping of the lamping levin afar
Between the full moon and the sunset star,

The war-song of the sounding skies aglow,
That have the herald thunder for their prophet :
From north to south the lyric lights that leap,
The tragic sundawns reddening east and west
As with bright blood from one Promethean
breast,

The peace of noon that strikes the sea to sleep,
The wail over the world of all that weep,
The peace of night when death brings life on
rest.

Goddess who gatherest all the herded waves
Into thy great sweet pastureless green fold,
Even for our love of old,

I pray thee by thy power that slays and saves,
Take thou my song of this thy flower to keep
Who hast my heart in hold ;

And from thine high place of thy garden-steep,
Where one sheer terrace oversees thy deep
From the utmost rock-reared height
Down even to thy dear depths of night and
light,

Take my song's salutation ; and on me
Breathe back the benediction of thy sea.

BIRTHDAY ODE

FOR THE ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL OF

VICTOR HUGO.

FEBRUARY 26TH, 1880.

*Between two seas the sea-bird's wing makes halt,
Wind-weary ; while with lifting head he waits
For breath to reinspire him from the gates
That open still toward sunrise on the vault
High-domed of morning, and in flight's default
With spreading sense of spirit anticipates
What new sea now may lure beyond the straits
His wings exulting that her winds exalt
And fill them full as sails to seaward spread,
Fulfilled with fair speca's promise. Pass, my song,
Forth to the heaven of thy desire and dread,
The presence of our lord, long loved and long
Far off above beholden, who to thee
Was as light kindling all a windy sea.*

BIRTHDAY ODE

FOR THE ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL OF VICTOR HUGO, FEBRUARY 26, 1880.

SPRING, born in heaven ere many a spring-
time flown, *strophe I.*

Dead spring that sawest on earth
A babe of deathless birth,
A flower of rosier flowerage than thine own,
A glory of goodlier godhead ; even this day,
That floods the mist of February with May,
And strikes death dead with sunlight, and the
breath

Whereby the deadly doers are done to death,
They that in day's despite
Would crown the imperial night,
And in deep hate of insubmissive spring
Rethrone the royal winter for a king,
This day that casts the days of darkness down
Low as a broken crown,
We call thee from the gulf of deeds and days,
Deathless and dead, to hear us whom we praise.

A light of many lights about thine head,
antistrophe I.

Lights manifold and one,
Stars molten in a sun,
A sun of divers beams incorporated,
Compact of confluent aureoles, each more fair
Than man, save only at highest of man, may
wear,

So didst thou rise, when this our grey-grown
age

Had trod two paces of his pilgrimage,
Two paces through the gloom
From his fierce father's tomb,
Led by cross lights of lightnings, and the
flame

That burned in darkness round one darkling
name ;

So didst thou rise, nor knewest thy glory, O
thou

Re-risen upon us now,
The glory given thee for a grace to give,
And take the praise of all men's hearts that
live.

First in the dewy ray *epode I.*

Ere dawn be slain of day

The fresh crowned lilies of discrowned kings'
prime

Sprang splendid as of old
With moonlight-coloured gold

And rays refract from the oldworld heaven of
time ;

Pale with proud light of stars decreased
In westward wane reluctant from the con-
quering east.

But even between their golden olden bloom
str. 2.

Strange flowers of wildwood glory,
With frost and moonshine hoary,
Thrust up the new growths of their green-
leaved gloom,

Red buds of ballad blossom, where the dew
Blushed as with bloodlike passion, and its hue
Was as the life and love of hearts on flame,
And fire from forth of each live chalice came :
Young sprays of elder song,
Stem straight and petal strong,
Bright foliage with dark frondage overlaid,
And light the lovelier for its lordlier shade ;
And morn and even made loud in woodland
lone

With cheer of clarions blown,
And through the tourney's clash and clarion's
cheer
Laugh to laugh echoing, tear washed off by
tear.

Then eastward far past northland lea and
lawn *ant. 2.*

Beneath a heavier light
Of stormier day and night
Began the music of the heaven of dawn ;
Bright sound of battle along the Grecian
waves,

Loud light of thunder above the Median
graves,

New strife, new song on Æschylean seas,
Canaris risen above Themistocles ;
Old glory of warrior ghosts
Shed fresh on filial hosts,
With dewfall redder than the dews of day,
And earth-born lightnings out of bloodbright
spray ;

Then through the flushed grey gloom on
shadowy sheaves

Low flights of falling leaves ;
And choirs of birds transfiguring as they
throng

All the world's twilight and the soul's to song.
Voices more dimly deep *ep. 2.*
Than the inmost heart of sleep,

And tender than the rose-mouthed morning
lips ;

And midmost of them heard
 The viewless water's word,
 The sea's breath in the wind's wing and the
 ship's,
 That bids one swell and sound and
 smite
 And rend that other in sunder as with fangs by
 night.

But ah ! the glory of shadow and mingling
 ray,
 The story of morn and even
 Whose tale was writ in heaven
 And had for scroll the night, for scribe the
 day !
 For scribe the prophet of the morning, far
 Exalted over twilight and her star ;
 For scroll beneath his Apollonian hand
 The dim twin wastes of sea and glimmering
 land.

Hark, on the hill-wind, clear
 For all men's hearts to hear
 Sound like a stream at nightfall from the steep
 That all time's depths might answer, deep to
 deep,
 With trumpet-measures of triumphal wail
 From windy vale to vale,
 The crying of one for love that strayed and
 sinned
 Whose brain took madness of the mountain
 wind.

Between the birds of brighter and duskier
 wing,
 What mightier-moulded forms
 Girt with red clouds and storms
 Mix their strong hearts with theirs that soar
 and sing ?
 Before the storm-blast blown of death's dark
 horn

The marriage moonlight withers, that the morn
 For two made one may find three made by
 death

One ruin at the blasting of its breath ;
 Clothed with heart's flame renewed
 And strange new maidenhood,
 Faith lightens on the lips that bloomed for hire
 Pure as the lightning of love's first-born fire :
 Wide-eyed and patient ever, till the curse
 Find where to fall and pierce,
 Keen expiation whets with edge more dread
 A father's wrong to smite a father's head.

Borgia, supreme from birth
 As loveliest born on earth

Since earth bore ever women that were fair ;
 Scarce known of her own house
 If daughter or sister or spouse ;
 Who holds men's hearts yet helpless with her
 hair ;
 The direst of divine things made,
 Bows down her amorous aureole half suffused
 with shade.

As red the fire-scathed royal northland bloom,
 That left our story a name
 Dyed through with blood and flame
 Ere her life shrivelled from a fierier doom
 Than theirs her priests bade pass from earth in
 fire
 To slake the thirst of God their Lord's desire :
 As keen the blast of love-enkindled fate
 That burst the Paduan tyrant's guarded gate ;
 As sad the softer moan
 Made one with music's own
 For one whose feet made music as they fell
 On ways by loveless love made hot from hell :
 But higher than these and all the song thereof
 The perfect heart of love,
 The heart by fraud and hate once crucified,
 That, dying, gave thanks, and in thanksgiving
 died.

Above the windy walls that rule the Rhine
 A noise of eagles' wings
 And wintry war-time rings,
 With roar of ravage trampling corn and vine
 And storm of wrathful wassail dashed with
 song
 And under these the watch of wreakless wrong,
 With fire of eyes anhungered ; and above
 These, the light of the stricken eyes of love,
 The faint sweet eyes that follow
 The wind-outwinging swallow,
 And face athirst with young wan yearning
 mouth
 Turned after toward the unseen all-golden
 south,
 Hopeless to see the birds back ere the wane,
 Or the leaves born again ;
 And still the might and music mastering fate
 Of life more strong than death and love than
 hate.

In special strength biform
 Stand the twin sons of storm
 Transfigured by transmission of one hand
 That gives the new-born time
 Their semblance more sublime
 Than once it lightened over each man's land ;

There Freedom's winged and wide-mouthed hound,
And here our high Dictator, in his son dis-crowned.

What strong-limbed shapes of kindred throng
round these
Before, between, behind,
Sons born of one man's mind,
Fed at his hands and fostered round his knees?
Fear takes the spirit in thralldom at his nod,
And pity makes it as the spirit of God,
As his own soul that from her throne above
Sheds on all souls of men her showers of love,
On all earth's evil and pain
Pours mercy forth as rain
And comfort as the dewfall on dry land;
And feeds with pity from a faultless hand
All by their own fault stricken, all cast out
By all men's scorn or doubt,
Or with their own hands wounded, or by fate
Brought into bondage of men's fear or hate.

In violence of strange visions north and south
Confronted, east and west,
With frozen or fiery breast,
Eyes fixed or fevered, pale or bloodred mouth,
Kept watch about his dawn-enkindled dreams;
But ere high noon a light of nearer beams
Made his young heaven of manhood more be-nign,
And love made soft his lips with spiritual wine,
And left them fired, and fed
With sacramental bread,
And sweet with honey of tenderer words than
tears
To feed men's hopes and fortify men's fears,
And strong to silence with benignant breath
The lips that doom to death,
And swift with speech like fire in fiery lands
To melt the steel's edge in the headsman's
hands.

Higher than they rose of old,
New builded now, behold,
The live great likeness of Our Lady's
towers;
And round them like a dove
Wounded, and sick with love,
One fair ghost moving, crowned with fateful
flowers,
Watched yet with eyes of bloodred lust
And eyes of love's heart broken and unbroken
trust.

But sadder always under shadowier skies,
More pale and sad and clear
Waxed always, drawn more near,
The face of Duty lit with Love's own eyes;
Till the awful hands that culled in rosier
hours
From fairy-footed fields of wild old flowers
And sorcerous woods of Rhineland, green and
hoary,
Young children's chaplets of enchanted story,
The great kind hands that showed
Exile its homeward road,
And, as man's helper made his foeman God,
Of pity and mercy wrought themselves a rod,
And opened for Napoleon's wondering kin
France, and bade enter in,
And threw for all the doors of refuge wide,
Took to them lightning in the thunder-tide.

For storm on earth above had risen from under,
Out of the hollow of hell,
Such storm as never fell
From darkest deeps of heaven distract with
thunder;

A cloud of cursing, past all shape of thought,
More foul than foulest dreams, and overfraught
With all obscene things and obscure of birth
That ever made infection of man's earth;
Having all hell for cloak
Wrapped round it as a smoke
And in its womb such offspring so defiled
As earth bare never for her loathliest child,
Rose, brooded, reddened, broke, and with its
breath
Put France to poisonous death;
Yea, far as heaven's red laboring eye could
glance,
France was not, save in men cast forth of
France.

Then,—while the plague-sore grew
Two darkling decades through,
And rankled in the festering flesh of time,—
Where darkness binds and frees
The wildest of wild seas
In fierce mutations of the unslumbering
clime,
There, sleepless too, o'er shuddering wrong
One hand appointed shook the reddening
scourge of song.

And through the lightnings of the apparent
word
Dividing shame's dense night
Sounds lovelier than the light

And light more sweet than song from night's
own bird
Mixed each their hearts with other, till the
gloom
Was glorious as with all the stars in bloom,
Sonorous as with all the spheres in chime
Heard far through flowering heaven : the sea,
sublime
Once only with its own
Old wind's and waters' tone,
Sad only or glad with its own glory, and crown-
ed
With its own light, and thrilled with its own
sound,
Learnt now their song, more sweet than heav-
en's may be,
Who pass away by sea ;
The song that takes of old love's land farewell,
With pulse of plangent water like a knell.
And louder ever and louder and yet more loud
Till night be shamed of morn
Rings the Black Huntsman's horn
Through darkening deeps beneath the covering
cloud,
Till all the wild beasts of the darkness hear ;
Till the Czar quake, till Austria cower for fear,
Till the king breathe not, till the priest wax pale,
Till spies and slayers on seats of judgment
quail,
Till mitre and cowl bow down
And crumble as a crown,
Till Cæsar driven to the lair and hounded
Pope
Reel breathless and drop heartless out of hope,
And one the uncleanest kinless beast of all
Lower than his fortune fall ;
The wolfish waif of casual empire, born
To turn all hate and horror cold with scorn.
Yea, even at night's full noon
Light's birth-song brake in tune,
Spake, witnessing that with us one must be,
God ; naming so by name
That priests have brought to shame
The strength whose scourge sounds on the
smitten sea ;
The mystery manifold of might
Which bids the wind give back to night the
things of night.

Even God, the unknown of all time ; force
or thought,
Nature or fate or will,
Clothed round with good and ill,
Veiled and revealed of all things and of
nought,

Hooded and helmed with mystery, girt and
shod
With light and darkness, unapparent God.
Him the high prophet o'er his wild work
bent
Found indivisible ever and immanent
At hidden heart of truth,
In forms of age and youth
Transformed and transient ever ; masked and
crowned,
From all bonds loosened and with all bonds
bound,
Diverse and one with all things ; love and
hate,
Earth, and the starry state
Of heaven immeasurable, and years that flee
As clouds and winds and rays across the sea.

But higher than stars and deeper than the
waves
Of day and night and morrow
That roll for all time, sorrow
Keeps ageless watch over perpetual graves.
From dawn to morning of the soul in flower,
Through toils and dreams and visions, to that
hour
When all the deeps were opened, and one
doom
Took two sweet lives to embrace them and en-
tomb,
The strong song plies its wing
That makes the darkness ring
And the deep light reverberate sound as deep ;
Song soft as flowers or grass more soft than
sleep,
Song bright as heaven above the mounting
bird,
Song like a god's tear heard
Falling, fulfilled of life and death and light,
And all the stars and all the shadow of night.

Till, when its flight hath past
Time's loftiest mark and last,
The goal where good kills evil with a kiss,
And Darkness in God's sight
Grows as his brother Light,
And heaven and hell one heart whence all
the abyss
Throbs with love's music ; from his
trance
Love waking leads it home to her who stayed
in France.

But now from all the world-old winds of the
air

One blast of record rings
 As from time's hidden springs
 With roar of rushing wings and fires that bear
 Toward north and south sonorous, east and
 west,
 Forth of the dark wherein its records rest
 The story told of the ages, writ nor sung
 By man's hand ever nor by mortal tongue
 Till, godlike with desire,
 One tongue of man took fire,
 One hand laid hold upon the lightning, one
 Rose up to bear time witness what the sun
 Had seen, and what the moon and stars of
 night
 Beholding lost not light :
 From dawn to dusk what ways man wander-
 ing trod
 Even through the twilight of the gods to God.

From dawn of man and woman twain and one,
 When the earliest dews impearled
 The front of all the world
 Ringed with aureole of the sun,
 To days that saw Christ's tears and hallowing
 breath
 Put life for love's sake in the lips of death,
 And years as waves whose brine was fire,
 whose foam
 Blood, and the ravage of Neronian Rome ;
 And the eastern crescent's horn
 Mightier awhile than morn ;
 And knights whose lives were flights of eagles'
 wings,
 And lives like snakes' lives of engendering
 kings ;
 And all the ravin of all the swords that reap
 Lives cast as sheaves on heap
 From all the billowing harvest-fields of fight ;
 And sounds of love-songs lovelier than the
 light.

The grim dim thrones of the east
 Set for death's riotous feast
 Round the bright board where darkling cen-
 turies wait,
 And servile slaughter, mute,
 Feeds power with fresh red fruit,
 Glitter and groan with mortal food of fate ;
 And throne and cup and lamp's bright
 breath
 Bear witness to their lord of only night and
 death.

Dead freedom by live empire lies defiled,
 And murder at his feet

Plies lust with wine and meat,
 With offering of an old man and a child,
 With holy body and blood, inexpressible
 Communion in the sacrament of hell,
 Till, reeking from their monstrous eucharist,
 The lips wax cold that murdered where they
 kissed,
 And empire in mid feast
 Fall as a slaughtered beast
 Headless, and ease men's hungering hearts of
 fear
 Lest God were none in heaven, to see nor hear,
 And purge his own pollution with the flood
 Poured of his black base blood
 So first found healing, poisonous as it poured ;
 And on the clouds the archangel cleanse his
 sword

As at the word unutterable that made
 Of day and night division,
 From vision on to vision,
 From dream to dream, from darkness into
 shade,
 From sunshine into sunlight, moves and lives
 The steersman's eye, the helming hand that
 gives
 Life to the wheels and wings that whirl along
 The immeasurable impulse of the sphere of
 song
 Through all the eternal years,
 Beyond all stars and spheres,
 Beyond the washing of the waves of time,
 Beyond all heights where no thought else may
 climb,
 Beyond the darkling dust of suns that were,
 Past height and depth of air ;
 And in the abyss whence all things move that
 are
 Finds only living Love, the sovereign star.

Nor less the weight and worth
 Found even of love on earth
 To wash all stain of tears and sins away,
 On dying lips alit
 That living knew not it,
 In the winged shape of song with death to
 play :
 To warm young children with its wings,
 And try with fire the heart elect for godlike
 things,

For all worst wants of all most miserable
 With divine hands to deal
 All balms and herbs that heal,
 Among all woes whereunder poor men dwell

Our Master sent his servant Love, to be
 On earth his witness ; but the strange deep
 sea,
 Mother of life and death inextricate,
 What work should Love do there, to war
 with fate ?
 Yet there must Love too keep
 At heart of the eyeless deep
 Watch, and wage war wide-eyed with all its
 wonders,
 Lower than the lightnings of its waves, and
 thunders
 Of seas less monstrous than the births they
 bred ;
 Keep high there heart and head,
 And conquer : then for prize of all toils past
 Feel the sea close them in again at last.

A day of direr doom arisen thereafter
 With cloud and fire in strife
 Lightens and darkens life
 Round one by man's hand masked with living
 laughter,
 A man by men monstered, but by love
 Watched with blind eyes as of a wakeful dove
 And wooed by lust, that in her rosy den
 As fire on flesh feeds on the souls of men,
 To take the intense impure
 Burnt-offering of her lure,
 Divine and dark and bright and naked, strange
 With ravenous thirst of life reversed and
 change,
 As though the very heaven should shrivel and
 swell
 With hunger after hell,
 Run mad for dear damnation, and desire
 To feel it light thrilled through with stings of
 fire.

Above a windier sea,
 The glory of Ninety-three
 Fiis heaven with blood-red and with rose-
 red beams
 That earth beholding grows
 Herself one burning rose
 'Flagran' and fragrant with strange deeds
 and dreams,
 Dreams dyed as love's own flower, and
 deeds
 Stained as with love's own life-blood, that for
 love's sake bleeds.
 And deeper than all deeps of sea and skies
 Wherein the shadows are
 Called sun and moon and star
 That rapt conjecture meets with mounting eyes,

Loud with strange waves and lustrous with
 new spheres,
 Shines, masked at once and manifest of years,
 Shakespeare, a heaven of heavenly eyes be-
 holden ;
 And forward years as backward years grow
 golden
 With light of deeds and words
 And flight of God's fleet birds,
 Angels of wrath and love and truth and pity ;
 And higher on exiled eyes their natural city
 Dawns down the depths of vision, more sub-
 lime
 Than all truths born of time ;
 And eyes that wept above two dear sons dead
 Grow saving stars to guard one hopeless head.
 Bright round the brows of banished age had
 shone
 In vision flushed with truth
 The rosy glory of youth
 On streets and woodlands where in days long
 gone
 Sweet love sang light and loud and deep and
 dear :
 And far the trumpets of the dreadful year
 Had pealed and wailed in darkness : last arose
 The song of children, kindling as a rose
 At breath of sunrise, born
 Of the red flower of morn
 Whose face perfumes deep heaven with odor-
 ous light
 And thrills all through the wings of souls in
 flight
 Close as the press of children at His knee
 Whom if the high priest see,
 Dreaming, as homeless on dark earth he trod,
 The lips that praise him shall not know for
 God.

O sovereign spirit, above
 All offering but man's love,
 All praise and prayer and incense undefiled !
 The one thing stronger found
 Than towers with iron bound ;
 The one thing lovelier than a little child,
 And deeper than the seas are deep,
 And tenderer than such tears of love as angels
 weep.

Dante, the seer of all things evil and good,
 Beheld two ladies, Beauty
 And high life-hallowing Duty,
 That strove for sway upon his mind and mood
 And held him in alternating accord
 Fast bound at feet of either : but our lord,

The seer and singer of righteousness and
wrong

Who stands now master of all the keys of
song,

Sees both as dewdrops run

Together in the sun,

For him not twain but one thing twice divine ;

Even as his speech and song are bread and
wine

For all souls hungering and all hearts athirst

At best of days and worst,

And both one sacrament of Love's great giving

To feed the spirit and sense of all souls living.

The seventh day in the wind's month ten years
gone

Since heaven-espousing earth

Gave the Republic birth,

The mightiest soul put mortal raiment on

That came forth singing ever in man's ears

Of all souls with us, and through all these
years

Rings yet the lordliest, waxen yet more strong

That on our souls hath shed itself in song,

Poured forth itself like rain

On souls like springing grain

That with its procreant beams and showers
were fed

For living wine and sacramental bread ;

Given all itself as air gives life and light,

Utterly, as of right ;

The goodliest gift our age hath given, to be

Ours, while the sun gives glory to the sea.

Our Father and Master and Lord,

Who hast thy song for sword,

For staff thy spirit, and our hearts for throne ;

As in past years of wrong,

Take now my subject song,

To no crowned head made humble but thine
own ;

That on thy day of worldly birth

Gives thanks for all thou hast given past thanks
of all on earth.

TRISTRAM OF LYONESSE.

PRELUDE.

TRISTRAM AND ISEULT.

Love, that is first and last of all things made,
The light that has the living world for shade,
The spirit that for temporal veil has on
The souls of all men woven in unison,
One fiery raiment with all lives inwrought
And lights of sunny and starry deed and
thought,

And alway through new act and passion new
Shines the divine same body and beauty
through,

The body spiritual of fire and light
That is to worldly noon as noon to night ;

Love, that is flesh upon the spirit of man
And spirit within the flesh whence breath be-
gan ;

Love, that keeps all the choir of lives in
chime ;

Love, that is blood within the veins of time ;
That wrought the whole world without stroke
of hand,

Shaping the breadth of sea, the length of land,
And with the pulse and motion of his breath
Through the great heart of the earth strikes
life and death,

The sweet twain chords that make the sweet
tune live

Through day and night of things alternative,
Through silence and through sound of stress
and strife,

And ebb and flow of dying death and life ;
Love, that sounds loud or light in all men's
ears,

Whence all men's eyes take fire from sparks
of tears,

That binds on all men's feet or chains or
wings ;

Love, that is root and fruit of terrene things ;
Love, that the whole world's waters shall not
drown,

The whole world's fiery forces not burn down ;

Love, that what time his own hands guard
his head

The whole world's wrath and strength shall
not strike dead ;

Love, that if once his own hands make his
grave

The whole world's pity and sorrow shall not
save ;

Love that for very life shall not be sold,
Nor bought nor bound with iron nor with
gold ;

So strong that heaven, could love bid heaven
farewell,

Would turn to fruitless and unflowering hell ;
So sweet that hell, to hell could love be given,

Would turn to splendid and sonorous heaven ;
Love that is fire within thee and light above,

And lives by grace of nothing but of love ;
Through many and lovely thoughts and much
desire

Led these twain to the life of tears and fire ;
Through many and lovely days and much de-
light

Led these twain to the lifeless life of night.

Yea, but what then ? albeit all this were
thus,

And soul smote soul and left it ruinous,
And love led love as eyeless men lead men,

Through chance by chance to deathward—
Ah, what then ?

Hath love not likewise led them further yet,
Out through the years where memories rise
and set,

Some large as suns, some moon-like warm
and pale,

Some starry-sighted, some through clouds
that sail

Seen as red flame through spectral float of
fume,

Each with the blush of its own special bloom

On the fair face of its own coloured light,
Distinguishable in all the host of night,
Divisible from all the radiant rest
And separable in splendour? Hath the best
Light of love's all, of all that burn and move,
A better heaven than heaven is? Hath not
love

Made for all these their sweet particular air
To shine in, their own beams and names to
bear,

Their ways to wander and their wards to
keep,

Till story and song and glory and all things
sleep?

Hath he not plucked from death of lovers
dead

Their musical soft memories, and kept red
The rose of their remembrance in men's eyes,
The sunsets of their stories in his skies,
The blush of their dead blood in lips that
speak

Of their dead lives, and in the listener's
cheek

That trembles with the kindling pity lit
In gracious hearts for some sweet fever-fit,
A fiery pity enkindled of pure thought
By tales that make their honey out of nought,
The faithless faith that lives without belief
Its light life through, the griefless ghost of
grief?

Yea, as warm night refashions the sere blood
In storm-struck petal or in sun-struck bud,
With tender hours and tempering dew to cure
The hunger and thirst of day's distemperature
And ravin of the dry discolouring hours,
Hath he not bid relume their flameless flow-
ers

With summer fire and heat of lamping song,
And bid the short-lived things, long dead,
live long,

And thought remake their wan funereal
fames,

And the sweet shining signs of women's
names

That mark the months out and the weeks
anew

He moves in changeless change of seasons
through

To fill the days up of his dateless year
Flame from Queen Helen to Queen Guene-
vere?

For first of all the sphyry signs whereby
Love severs light from darkness, and most
high,

In the white front of January there glows

The rose-red sign of Helen like a rose :
And gold-eyed as the shore flower shelterless
Whereon the sharp-breathed sea blows bitter-
ness,

A storm-star that the seafarers of love
Strain their wind-wearied eyes for glimpses
of,

Shoots keen through February's grey frost
and damp

The lamplike star of Hero for a lamp ;
The star that Marlowe sang into our skies
With mouth of gold, and mourning in his
eyes ;

And in clear March across the rough blue sea
The signal sapphire of Alcione

Makes bright the blown brows of the wind-
foot year ;

And shining like a sunbeam-smitten tear
Full ere it fall, the fair next sign in sight
Burns opal-wise with April-coloured light

When air is quick with song and rain and
flame,

My birth-month star that in love's heaven
hath name

Iseult, a light of blossom and beam and
shower,

My singing sign that makes the song-tree
flower ;

Next like a pale and burning pearl beyond
The rose-white sphere of flower-named Rosa-
mond

Signs the sweet head of Maytime ; and for
June

Flares like an angered and storm-reddening
moon

Her signal sphere, whose Carthaginian pyre
Shadowed her traitor's flying sail with fire ;
Next, glittering as the wine-bright jacinth-
stone,

A star south-risen that first to music shone,
The keen girl-star of golden Juliet bears
Light northward to the month whose fore-
head wears

Her name for flower upon it, and his trees
Mix their deep English song with Veronese ;
And like an awful sovereign chrysolite
Burning, the supreme fire that blinds the
night,

The hot gold head of Venus kissed by Mars,
A sun flower among small sphered flowers of
stars,

The light of Cleopatra fills and burns
The hollow of heaven whence ardent August
yearns ;

And fixed and shining as the sister-shed

Sweet tears for Phaethon disorbed and dead,
The pale bright autumn's amber-coloured
sphere,

That through September sees the saddening
year

As love sees change through sorrow, hath to
name

Francesca's ; and the star that watches flame
The embers of the harvest overgone

Is Thisbe's, slain of love in Babylon,
Set in the golden girdle of sweet signs

A blood-bright ruby ; last save one light
shines

An eastern wonder of spherical chrysopras,
The star that made men mad, Angelica's ;

And latest named and lordliest, with a sound
Of swords and harps in heaven that ring it
round,

Last love-light and last love-song of the
year's,

Gleams like a glorious emerald Guenever's.
These are the signs wherethrough the year
sees move,

Full of the sun, the sun-god which is love,
A fiery body blood-red from the heart

Outward, with fire-white wings made wide
apart,

That close not and uncloze not, but upright
Steered without wind by their own light and
might

Sweep through the flameless fire of air that
rings

From heaven to heaven with thunder of
wheels and wings

And antiphones of motion-moulded rhyme
Through spaces out of space and timeless
time.

So shine above dead chance and conquered
change

The spherèd signs and leave without their
range

Doubt and desire, and hope with fear for
wife,

Pale pains, and pleasures long worn out of
life.

Yea, even the shadows of them spiritless,
Through the dim door of sleep that seem to
press,

Forms without form, a piteous people and
blind

Men and no men, whose lamentable kind
The shadow of death and shadow of life com-
pel

Through semblances of heaven and false-
faced hell,

Through dreams of light and dreams of dark-
ness lost

On waves innavigable, are these so lost ?
Shapes that wax pale and shift in swift strange
wise,

Void faces with unspeculative eyes,
Dim things that gaze and glare, dead mouths
that move,

Featureless heads disowned of hate and
love,

Mockeries and masks of motion and mute
breath,

Leavings of life, the superflux of death—
If these things and no more than these things
be

Left when man ends or changes, who can see ?
Or who can say with what more subtle sense

Their subtler natures taste in air less dense
A life less thick and palpable than ours,

Warmed with faint fires and sweetened with
dead flowers

And measured by low music ? how time fares
In that wan time-forgotten world of theirs,

Their pale poor world too deep for sun or star
To live in, where the eyes of Helen are,

And hers who made as God's own eyes to shine
The eyes that met them of the Florentine,

Wherein the godhead thence transfigured lit
All time for all men with the shadow of it ?

Ah, and these too felt on them as God's
grace

The pity and glory of this man's breathing
face ;

For these too, these my lovers, these my
twain,

Saw Dante, saw God visible by pain,
With lips that thundered and with feet that
trod

Before men's eyes incognisable God ;
Saw love and wrath and light and night and
fire

Live with one life and at one mouth respire,
And in one golden sound their whole soul
heard

Sounding, one sweet immitigable word.
They have the night who had like us the
day ;

We, whom day binds, shall have the night as
they.

We, from the fetters of the light unbound,
Healed of our wound of living, shall sleep
sound.

All gifts but one the jealous God may keep
From our soul's longing, one he cannot—
sleep.

This, though he grudge all other grace to
prayer,

This grace his closed hand cannot choose but
spare.

This, though his ear be sealed to all that live,
Be it lightly given or lothly, God must give.
We, as the men whose name on earth is none,
We too shall surely pass out of the sun ;
Out of the sound and eyeless light of things,
Wide as the stretch of life's time-wandering
wings,

Wide as the naked world and shadowless,
And long-lived as the world's own weariness.
Us too, when all the fires of time are cold,
The heights shall hide us and the depths shall
hold.

Us too, when all the tears of time are dry,
This night shall lighten from her tearless eye.
Blind is the day and eyeless all its light,
But the large unbewildered eye of night
Hath sense and speculation ; and the sheer
Limitless length of lifeless life and clear,
The timeless space wherein the brief worlds
move

Clothed with light life and fruitful with light
love,

With hopes that threaten, and with fears that
cease,

Past fear and hope, hath in it only peace.

Yet of these lives inlaid with hopes and
fears,

Spun fine as fire and jewelled thick with tears,

These lives made out of loves that long since
were,

Lives wrought as ours of earth and burning
air,

Fugitive flame and water of secret springs,
And clothed with joys and sorrows as with
wings,

Some yet are good, if aught be good, to save
Some while from washing wreck and wreck-
ing wave.

Was such not theirs, the twain I take, and
give

Out of my life to let their dead life live
Some days of mine, and blow my living
breath

Between dead lips forgotten even of death ?
So many and many of old have given my
twain

Love and life song and honey-parted pain,
Whose root is sweetness and whose fruit is
sweet,

So many and with such joy have tracked their
feet,

What should I do to follow ? yet I too,
I have the heart to follow, many or few
Be the feet gone before me ; for the way,
Rose-red with remnant roses of the day
Westward, and eastward white with stars that
break,

Between the green and foam is fair to take
For any sail the sea-wind steers for me
From morning into morning, sea to sea.

I.

THE SAILING OF THE SWALLOW.

ABOUT the middle music of the spring
Came from the castled shore of Ireland's king
A fair ship stoutly sailing, eastward bound
And south by Wales and all its wonders round
To the loud rocks and ringing reaches home
That take the wild wrath of the Cornish foam,
Past Lyonesse unswallowed of the tides
And high Carlion that now the steep sea hides
To the wind-hollowed heights and gusty bays
Of sheer Tintagel, fair with famous days.
Above the stem a gilded swallow shone,

Wrought with straight wings and eyes of glit-
tering stone

As flying sunward oversea, to bear
Green summer with it through the singing air.
And on the deck between the rowers at dawn,
As the bright sail with brightening wind was
drawn,

Sat with full face against the strengthening
light

Isult, more fair than foam or dawn was
white.

Her gaze was glad past love's own singing of,
 And her face lovely past desire of love.
 Past thought and speech her maiden motions
 were,
 And a more golden sunrise was her hair.
 The very veil of her bright flesh was made
 As of light woven and moonbeam-colored
 shade
 More fine than moonbeams ; white her eye-
 lids shone
 As snow sun-stricken that endures the sun,
 And through their curled and coloured clouds
 of deep
 Luminous lashes thick as dreams in sleep
 Shone as the sea's depth swallowing up the
 sky's
 The springs of unimaginable eyes.
 As the wave's subtler emerald is pierced
 through
 With the utmost heaven's inextricable blue,
 And both are woven and molten in one sleight
 Of amorous color and implicated light
 Under the golden guard and gaze of noon,
 So glowed their aweless amorous plenilune,
 Azure and gold and ardent grey, made strange
 With fiery difference and deep interchange
 Inexplicable of glories multiform :
 Now as the sullen sapphire swells toward
 storm
 Foamless, their bitter beauty grew acold,
 And now afire with ardour of fine gold.
 Her flower-soft lips were meek and passion-
 ate,
 For love upon them like a shadow sate
 Patient, a foreseen vision of sweet things,
 A dream with eyes fast shut and plumeless
 wings
 That knew not what man's love or life should
 be,
 Nor had it sight nor heart to hope or see
 What thing should come, but childlike satis-
 fied
 Watched out its virgin vigil in soft pride
 And unknissed expectation ; and the glad
 Clear cheeks and throat and tender temples
 had
 Such maiden heat as if a rose's blood
 Beat in the live heart of a lily-bud.
 Between the small round breasts a white way
 led
 Heavenward, and from slight foot to slender
 head
 The whole fair body flower-like swayed and
 shone
 Moving, and what her light hand leant upon

Grew blossom-scented ; her warm arms began
 To round and ripen for delight of man
 That they should clasp and circle : her fresh
 hands,
 Like regent lilies of reflowering lands
 Whose vassal firstlings, crown and star and
 plume,
 Bow down to the empire of that sovereign
 bloom,
 Shone sceptreless, and from her face there
 went
 A silent light as of a God content ;
 Save when, more swift and keen than love or
 shame,
 Some flash of blood, light as the laugh of
 flame,
 Broke it with sudden beam and shining
 speech,
 As dream by dream shot through her eyes,
 and each
 Outshone the last that lightened, and not
 one
 Showed her such things as should be borne
 and done,
 Though hard against her shone the sunlike
 face
 That in all change and wreck of time and
 place
 Should be the star of hersweet living soul.
 Nor had love made it as his written scroll
 For evil will and good to read in yet ;
 But smooth and mighty, without scar or fret,
 Fresh and high-lifted was the helmetless brow
 As the oak-tree flower that tops the topmost
 bough,
 Ere it drop off before the perfect leaf ;
 And nothing save his name he had of grief,
 The name his mother, dying as he was born,
 Made out of sorrow in very sorrow's scorn,
 And set it on him smiling in her sight,
 Tristram ; who now, clothed with sweet youth
 and might,
 As a glad witness wore that bitter name,
 The second symbol of the world for fame.
 Famous and full of fortune was his youth
 Ere the beard's bloom had left his cheek un-
 smooth,
 And in his face a lordship of strong joy
 And height of heart no chance could curb or
 cloy
 Lightened, and all that warmed them at his
 eyes
 Loved them as larks that kindle as they rise
 Toward light they turn to music love the blue
 strong skies.

So like the morning through the morning
 moved
 Tristram, a light to look on and be loved.
 Song sprang between his lips and hands, and
 shone
 Singing, and strengthened and sank down
 thereon
 As a bird settles to the second flight,
 Then from beneath his harping hands with
 might
 Leapt, and made way and had its fill and
 died,
 And all whose hearts were fed upon it sighed
 Silent, and in them all the fire of tears
 Burned as wine drunken not with lips but
 ears.
 And gazing on his fervent hands that made
 The might of music all their souls obeyed
 With trembling strong subservience of delight,
 Full many a maid that had him once in sight
 Thought in the secret rapture of her heart
 In how dark onset had these hands borne
 part
 How oft, and were so young and sweet of
 skill;
 And those red lips whereon the song burned
 still,
 What words and cries of battle had they flung
 Athwart the swing and shriek of swords, so
 young;
 And eyes as glad as summer, what strange
 youth
 Fed them so full of happy heart and truth,
 That had seen sway from side to sundering
 side
 The steel flow of that terrible springtide
 That the moon rules not, but the fire and
 light
 Of men's hearts mixed in the mid mirth of
 fight.
 Therefore the joy and love of him they had
 Made thought more amorous in them and
 more glad
 For his fame's sake remembered, and his
 youth
 Gave his fame flowerlike fragrance and soft
 growth
 As of a rose requickening, when he stood
 Fair in their eye, a flower of faultless blood.
 And that sad queen to whom his life was
 death,
 A rose plucked forth of summer in mid breath,
 A star fall'n out of season in mid throe
 Of that life's joy that makes the star's life
 glow,
 Made their love sadder toward him and more
 strong,
 And in mid change of time and fight and song
 Chance cast him westward on the low sweet
 strand
 Where songs are sung of the old green Irish
 land,
 And the sky loves it, and the sea loves best,
 And as a bird is taken to man's breast
 The sweet-souled land where sorrow sweet-
 est sings
 Is wrapt round with them as with hands and
 wings
 And taken to the sea's heart as a flower.
 There in the luck and light of his good hour
 Came to the king's court like a noteless man
 Tristram, and while some half a season ran
 Abode before him harping in his hall,
 And taught sweet craft of new things musical
 To the dear maiden mouth and innocent
 hands
 That for his sake are famous in all lands.
 Yet was not love between them, for their fate
 Lay wrapt in its appointed hour at wait,
 And had no flower to show yet, and no sting.
 But once being vexed with some past wound
 the king
 Bade give him comfort of sweet baths, and
 then
 Should Iseult watch him as his handmaiden,
 For his more honour in men's sight, and ease
 The hurts he had with holy remedies
 Made by her mother's magic in strange hours
 Out of live roots and life-compelling flowers.
 And finding by the wound's shape in his
 side
 This was the knight by whom their strength
 had died
 And all their might in one man overthrown
 Had left their shame in sight of all men
 shown,
 She would have slain him swordless with his
 sword;
 Yet seemed he to her so great and fair a lord
 She heaved up hand and smote not; then said
 he,
 Laughing—'What comfort shall this dead
 man be,
 Damsel? what hurt is for my blood to heal?
 But set your hand not near the toothed steel
 Lest the fang strike it.'—'Yea, the fang,' she
 said,
 'Should it not sting the very serpent dead
 That stung my uncle? for his slayer art thou,
 And half my mother's heart is bloodless now

Through thee, that mad'st the veins of all her
kin

Bleed in his wounds whose veins through thee
ran thin.

Yet thought she how their hot chief's violent
heart

Had flung the fierce word forth upon their
part

Which bade to battle the best knight that
stood

On Arthur's, and so dying of his wild mood
Had set upon his conqueror's flesh the seal

Of his mishallowed and anointed steel,
Whereof the venom and enchanted might

Made the sign burn here branded in her sight.
These things she stood recasting, and her soul

Subsiding till its wound of wrath were whole
Grew smooth again, as though still softening

stole
Through all its tempered passion ; nor might
hate

Keep high the fire against him lit of late ;
But softly from his smiling sight she passed.

And peace thereafter made between them fast
Made peace between two kingdoms, when he

went
Home with hands reconciled and heart con-
tent,

To bring fair truce 'twixt Cornwall's wild
bright strand

And the long wrangling wars of that loud
land.

And when full peace was struck betwixt them
twain

Forth must he fare by those green straits
again,

And bring back Iseult for a plighted bride
And set to reign at Mark his uncle's side.

So now with feast made and all triumphs done
They sailed between the moonfall and the sun

Under the spent stars eastward ; but the queen
Out of wise heart and subtle love had seen

Such things as might be, dark as in a glass,
And lest some doom of these should come to

pass
Bethought her with her secret soul alone

To work some charm for marriage unison
And strike the heart of Iseult to her lord

With power compulsive more than stroke of
sword.

Therefore with marvellous herbs and spells
she wrought

To win the very wonder of her thought,
And brewed it with her secret hands and

blest

And drew and gave out of her secret breast
To one her chosen and Iseult's handmaiden,
Brangwain, and bade her hide from sight of
men

This marvel covered in a golden cup,
So covering in her heart the counsel up

As in the gold the wondrous wine lay close :
And when the last shout with the last cup rose

About the bride and bridegroom bound to bed,
Then should this one word of her will be said

To her new-married maiden child, that she
Should drink with Mark this draught in unity.

And no lip touch it for her sake but theirs :
For with long love and consecrating prayers

The wine was hallowed for their mouths to
pledge ;

And if a drop fell from the beaker's edge
That drop should Iseult hold as dear as

blood
Shed from her mother's heart to do her good.

And having drunk they twain should be one
heart

Who were one flesh till fleshly death should
part—

Death, who parts all. So Brangwain swore,
and kept

The hid thing by her while she waked or
slept.

And now they sat to see the sun again
Whose light of eye had looked on no such

twain
Since Galahault in the rose-time of the year

Brought Launcelot first to sight of Guene-
vere.

And Tristram caught her changing eyes
and said :

' As this day raises daylight from the dead
Might not this face the light of a dead man ? '

And Iseult, gazing where the sea was wan
Out of the sun's way, said : ' I pray you not

Praise me, but tell me there in Camelot,
Saving the queen, who hath most name of

fair ?
I would I were a man and dwelling there.

That I might win me better praise than
yours,

Even such as you have ; for your praise en-
dures,

That with great deeds ye wring from mouths
of men,

But ours—for shame, where is it ? Tell me
then,

Since woman may not wear a better here,
Who of this praise hath most save Guene-
vere ? '

And Tristram, lightening with a laugh
held in—

'Surely a little praise is this to win,
A poor praise and a little ! but of these
Hapless, whom love serves only with bowed
knees.

Of such poor women fairer face hath none
That lifts her eyes alive against the sun
Than Arthur's sister, whom the north seas
call

Mistress of isles ; so yet majestic
Above the crowns on younger heads she
moves,
Outlightening with her eyes our late-born
loves.'

'Ah,' said Iseult, 'is she more tall than I ?
Look, I am tall ;' and struck the mast hard
by,

With utmost upward reach of her bright
hand ;

'And look, fair lord, now, when I rise and
stand,

How high with feet uplifted I can touch
Standing straight up ; could this queen do
thus much ?

Nay, over tall she must be then, like me ;
Less fair than lesser women. May this be,
That still she stands the second stateliest
there,

So more than many so much younger fair,
She, born when yet the king your lord was
not,

And has the third knight after Launcelot
And after you to serve her ? nay, sir, then
God made her for a godlike sign to men.'

'Ay,' Tristram answered, 'for a sign, a
sign—

Would God it were not ! for no planets shine
With half such fearful forecast of men's fate
As a fair face so more unfortunate.'

Then with a smile that lit not on her brows
But moved upon her red mouth tremulous

Light as a sea-bird's motion oversea,
'Yea,' quoth Iseult, 'the happier hap for me,
With no such face to bring men no such fate.

Yet her might all we women born too late
Praise for good hap, who so enskied above
Not more in age excels us than man's love.'

There came a glooming light on Tristram's
face

Answering : 'God keep you better in his
grace

Than to sit down beside her in men's sight.

For if men be not blind whom God gives
light

And lie not in whose lips he bids truth live,
Great grief shall she be given, and greater give,
For Merlin witnessed of her years ago

That she should work woe and should suffer
woe

Beyond the race of women : and in truth
Her face, a spell that knows nor age nor
youth,

Like youth being soft, and subtler-eyed than
age,

With lips that mock the doom her eyes
presage,

Hath on it such a light of cloud and fire,
With charm and change of keen or dim de-
sire,

And over all a fearless look of fear
Hung like a veil across its changing cheer,

Made up of fierce foreknowledge and sharp
scorn,

That it were better she had not been born.
For not love's self can help a face which
hath

Such insubmissive anguish of wan wrath,
Blind prescience and self-contemptuous hate
Of her own soul and heavy-footed fate,

Writ broad upon its beauty : none the less
Its fire of bright and burning bitterness

Takes with as quick a flame the sense of men
As any sunbeam, nor is quenched again

With any drop of dewfall ; yea, I think
No herb of force or blood-compelling drink

Would heal a heart that ever it made hot.
Ay, and men too that greatly love her not,

Seeing the great love of her and Lamoracke,
Make no great marvel, nor look strangely
back

When with his gaze about her she goes by
Pale as a breathless and star-quicken sky

Between moonrise and sunset, and moves out
Clothed with the passion of his eyes about

As night with all her stars, yet night is black ;
And she, clothed warm with love of Lamor-
acke,

Girt with his worship as with girdling gold,
Seems all at heart anhungered and acold,

Seems sad at heart and loveless of the light,
As night, star-clothed or naked, is but night.'

And with her sweet eyes sunken, and the
mirth

Dead in their look as earth lies dead in earth
That reigned on earth and triumphed, Iseult

said :

'Is it her shame of something done and dead
Or fear of something to be born and done'

That so in her soul's eye puts out the sun ?'

And Tristram answered: 'Surely, as I think,
This gives her soul such bitterness to drink,
The sin born blind, the sightless sin unknown,
Wrought when the summer in her blood was blown,
But scarce aflower, and spring first flushed her will
With bloom of dreams no fruitage should fulfil,
When out of vision and desire was wrought
The sudden sin that from the living thought
Leaps a live deed and dies not: then there came
On that blind sin swift eyesight like a flame
Touching the dark to death, and made her mad
With helpless knowledge that too late forbade
What was before the bidding; and she knew
How sore a life dead love should lead her through
'To what sure end how fearful; and though yet
Nor with her blood nor tears her way be wet
And she look bravely with set face on fate,
Yet she knows well the serpent hour at wait
Somewhere to sting and spare not; ay, and he, Arthur'—

'The king, quoth Iseult suddenly,
'Doth the king too live so in sight of fear?
They say sin touches not a man so near
As shame a woman; yet he too should be
Part of the penance, being more deep than she
Set in the sin.'

'Nay,' Tristram said, 'for thus
It fell by wicked hap and hazardous,
That wittingly he sinned no more than youth
May sin and be assailed of God and truth,
Repenting; since in his first year of reign
As he stood splendid with his foemen slain
And light of new-blown battles, flushed and hot

With hope and life, came greeting from King Lot

Out of his wind-worn islands oversea,
And homage to my king and fealty
Of those north seas wherein the strange
shapes swim,

As from his man; and Arthur greeted him
As his good lord and courteously, and bade
To his high feast; who coming with him had
This Queen Morgause of Orkney, his fair
wife,

In the green middle Maytime of her life,
And scarce in April was our king's as then,
And goodliest was he of all flowering men,
And of what graft as yet himself knew not;
But cold as rains in autumn was King Lot
And grey-grown out of season: so there sprang

Swift love between them, and all spring
through sang

Light in their joyous hearing; for none knew
The bitter bond of blood between them two.
Twain fathers but one mother, till too late
The sacred mouth of Merlin set forth fate
And brake the secret seal on Arthur's birth,
And showed his ruin and his rule on earth
Inextricable, and light on lives to be.

For surely, though time slay us, yet shall we
Have such high name and lordship of good
days

As shall sustain us living, and men's praise
Shall burn a beacon lit above us dead.

And of the king how shall not this be said
When any of us from any mouth has praise,
That such were men in only this king's days,
In Arthur's? yea, come shine or shade, no
less

His name shall be one name with knight-
liness,

His fame one light with sunlight. Yet in
sooth

His age shall bear the burdens of his youth
And bleed from his own bloodshed; for in-
deed

Blind to him blind his sister brought forth
seed,

And of the child between them shall be born
Destruction: so shall God not suffer scorn,
Nor in men's souls and lives his law lie dead.'

And as one moved and marvelling Iseult
said:

'Great pity it is and strange it seems to me
God could not do them so much right as we,
Who slay not men for witless evil done;
And these the noblest under God's glad sun
For sin they knew not he that knew shall slay,
And smite blind men for stumbling in fair
day.

What good is it to God that such should die?
Shall the sun's light grow sunnier in the sky
Because their light of spirit is clean put out?'

And sighing, she looked from wave to
cloud about,

And even with that the full-grown feet of day
Sprang upright on the quivering water-way,
And his face burned against her meeting face

Most like a lover's filled with great love's
grace

Whose glance takes fire and gives ; the quick
sea shone

And shivered like spread wings of angels
blown

By the sun's breath before him ; and a low
Sweet gale shook all the foam-flowers of thin
snow

As into rain-fall of sea-roses shed
Leaf by wild leaf on that green garden-bed
Which tempests till and sea-winds turn and
plough :

For rosy and fiery round the running prow
Fluttered the flakes and feathers of the spray,
And bloomed like blossoms cast by God away
To waste on the ardent water ; swift the
moon

Withered to westward as a face in swoon
Death-stricken by glad tidings : and the
height

Throbbled and the centre quivered with de-
light

And the depth quailed with passion as of
love,

Till like the heart of some new-mated dove
Air, light, and wave seemed full of burning
rest,

With motion as of one God's beating breast.
And her heart sprang in Iseult, and she
drew

With all her spirit and life the sunrise through,
And through her lips the keen triumphant air
Sea-scented, sweeter than land-roses were,
And through her eyes the whole rejoicing
east

Sun-satisfied, and all the heaven at feast
Spread for the morning ; and the imperious
mirth

Of wind and light that moved upon the earth,
Making the spring, and all the fruitful might
And strong regeneration of delight

That swells the seedling leaf and sapling man,
Since the first life in the first world began
To burn and burgeon through void limbs and
veins,

And the first love with sharp sweet procreant
pains

To pierce and bring forth roses ; yea, she felt
Through her own soul the sovereign morning
melt,

And all the sacred passion of the sun ;
And as the young clouds flamed and were un-
done

About him coming, touched and burnt away

In rosy ruin and yellow spoil of day,
The sweet veil of her body and corporal sense
Felt the dawn also cleave it, and incense
With light from inward and with effluent heat
The kindling soul through fleshly hands and
feet.

And as the august great blossom of the dawn
Burst, and the full sun scarce from sea with-
drawn

Seemed on the fiery water a flower afloat,
So as a fire the mighty morning smote
Throughout her, and incensed with the influ-
ent hour

Her whole soul's great mystical red flower
Burst, and the bud of her sweet spirit broke
Rose-fashion, and the strong spring at a
stroke

Thrilled, and was cloven, and from the full
sheath came

The whole rose of the woman red as flame :
And all her Mayday blood as from a swoon
Flushed, and May rose up in her and was
June.

So for a space her heart as heavenward
burned :

Then with half summer in her eyes she
turned,

And on her lips were April yet, and smiled,
As though the spirit and sense unreconciled
Shrank laughing back, and would not ere its
hour

Let life put forth the irrevocable flower.

And the soft speech between them grew
again

With questionings and records of what men
Rose mightiest, and what names for love or
fight

Shone starriest overhead of queen or knight.
There Tristram spake of many a noble thing,
High feast and storm of tourney round the
king,

Strange quest by perilous lands of marsh and
brake,

And circling woods branch-knotted like a
snake,

And places pale with sins that they had seen
Where was no life of red fruit or of green
But all was as a dead face wan and dun ;

And bowers of evil builders whence the sun
Turns silent, and the moon holds hardly
light

Above them through the sick and star-crossed
night ;

And of their hands through whom such holds
lay waste,

And all their strengths dishevelled and de-
faced
Fell ruinous, and were not from north to
south :

And of the might of Merlin's ancient mouth,
The son of no man's loins, begot by doom
In speechless sleep out of a spotless womb ;
For sleeping among graves where none had
rest

And ominous houses of dead bones unblest
Among the grey grass rough as old rent hair
And wicked herbage whitening like despair
And blown upon with blasts of dolorous
breath

From gaunt rare gaps and hollow doors of
death,

A maid unspotted, senseless of the spell,
Felt not about her breathe some thing of hell
Whose child and hers was Merlin ; and to
him

Great light from God gave sight of all things
dim

And wisdom of all wondrous things, to say
What root should bear, what fruit of night or
day,

And sovereign speech and counsel higher than
man ;

Wherefore his youth like age was wise and
wan,

And his age sorrowful and fain to sleep ;
Yet should sleep never, neither laugh nor
weep,

Till in some depth of deep sweet land or sea
The heavenly hands of holier Nimue,
That was the nurse of Launcelot, and most
sweet

Of all that move with magical soft feet
Among us, being of lovelier blood and breath,
Should shut him in with sleep as kind as
death :

For she could pass between the quick and
dead :

And of her love toward Pelleas, for whose
head

Love-wounded and world-wearied she had
won

A place beyond all pain in Avalon ;
And of the fire that wasted afterward

The loveless eyes and bosom of Etarede,
In whose false love his faultless heart had
burned ;

And now being rapt from her, her lost heart
yearned

To seek him, and passed hungering out of
life :

And after all the thunder-hours of strife
That roared between King Claudas and King
Ban

How Nimue's mighty nursling waxed to man,
And how from his first field such grace he got
That all men's hearts bowed down to Launce-
lot,

And how the high prince Galahault held him
dear

And led him even to love of Guenevere
And to that kiss which made break forth as
fire

The laugh that was the flower of his desire,
The laugh that lightened at her lips for bliss
To win from love so great a lover's kiss :
And of the toil of Balen all his days

To reap but thorns for fruit and tears for
praise,

Whose hap was evil as his heart was good,
And all his works and ways by wold and
wood

Led through much pain to one last labouring
day

When blood for tears washed grief with life
away :

And of the kin of Arthur, and their might ;
The misborn head of Mordred, sad as night,
With cold waste cheeks and eyes as keen as
pain,

And the close angry lips of Agravaire ;
And gracious Gawain, scattering words as
flowers,

The kindest head of worldly paramours ;
And the fair hand of Gareth, found in fight
Strong as a sea-beast's tusches and as white ;
And of the king's self, glorious yet and glad
For all the toil and doubt of doom he had,
Clothed with men's loves and full of kingly
days.

Then Iseult said : ' Let each knight have
his praise

And each good man good witness of his
worth ;

But when men laud the second name on earth,
Whom would they praise to have no worldly
peer

Save him whose love makes glorious Guene-
vere ?'

' Nay,' Tristram said, ' such man as he is
none.'

' What,' said she, ' there is none such under
sun

Of all the large earth's living ? yet I deemed
Men spake of one—but maybe men that
dreamed,

Fools and tongue-stricken, witless, babblers
breed—

That for all high things was his peer indeed
Save this one highest, to be so loved and
love.

And Tristram said : ' Little wit had these
thereof ;

For there is none such in the world as this.
' Ay, upon land,' quoth Iseult, ' none such is,
I doubt not, nor where fighting folk may be ;
But were there none such between sky and sea,
The world's whole worth were poorer than I
wist.'

And Tristram took her flower-white hand
and kissed,
Laughing ; and through his fair face as in
shame

The light blood lightened. ' I hear they no
such name ?'

She said ; and he, ' If there be such a word,
I wot the queen's poor harper hath not heard.'
Then, as the fuller-feathered hours grew long,
He help to speed their warm slow feet with
song.

' Love, is it morning risen or night deceased
That makes the mirth of this triumphant east ?
Is it bliss given or bitterness put by
That makes most glad men's hearts at love's high
feast ?
Grief smiles, joy weeps, that day should live and
die.

' Is it with soul's thirst or with body's drought
That summer yearns out sunward to the south,
With all the flowers that when thy birth drew
nigh
Were molten in one rose to make thy mouth ?
O love, what care though day should live and
die ?

' Is the sun glad of all the love on earth,
The spirit and sense and work of things and worth ?
Is the moon sad because the month must fly
And bring her death that can but bring back birth ?
For all these things as day must live and die.

' Love, is it day that makes thee thy delight
Or thou that seest day made out of thy light ?
Love, as the sun and sea are thou and I,
Sea without sun dark, sun without sea bright ;
The sun is one though day should live and die.

' O which is elder night or light, who knows ?
And life or love, which first of these twain grows ?
For life is born of love to wail and cry,
And love is born of life to heal his woes,
And light of night, that day should live and die.

' O sun of heaven above the worldly sea,
O very love, what light is this of thee !
My sea of soul is deep as thou art high,
But all thy light is shed through all of me,
As love's through love, while day shall live and
die.

' Nay,' said Iseult, ' your song is hard to
read.'

' Ay?' said he : ' or too light a song to
heed,

Too slight to follow, it may be ? Who shall
sing

Of love but as a churl before a king
If by love's worth men rate his worthiness ?
Yet as the poor churl's worth to sing is less,
Surely the more shall be the great king's grace
To show for churlish love a kindlier face.'

' No churl,' she said, ' but one in sooth-
sayer's wise

Who tells but truths that help no more than
lies.

I have heard men sing of love a simpler way
Than these wrought riddles made of night
and day,

Like jewelled reins whereon the rhyme-bells
hang.'

And Tristram smiled and changed his song
and sang.

' The breath between my lips of lips not mine,
Like spirit in sense that makes pure sense divine,
Is as life in them from the living sky
That entering fills my heart with blood of thine
And thee with me, while day shall live and die

' Thy soul is shed into me with thy breath,
And in my heart each heartbeat of thee saith
How in thy life the offsprings of me lie,
Even one life to be gathered of one death
In me and thee, though day may live and die.

' Ah, who knows now if in my veins it be
My blood that feels life sweet, or blood of thee,
And this thine eyesight kindled in mine eye
That shows me in thy flesh the soul of me,
For thine made mine, while day may live and
die ?

' Ah, who knows yet if one be twain or one,
And sunlight separable again from sun,
And I from thee with all my lifespings dry,
And thou from me with all thine heartbeats done,
Dead separate souls while day shall live and die ?

' I see my soul within thine eyes, and hear
My spirit in all thy pulses thrill with fear,
And in my lips the passion of thee sigh,
And music of me made in mine own ear ;
Am I not thou while day shall live and die ?

' Art thou not I as I thy love am thou ?
So let all things pass from us ; we are now,
For all that was and will be, who knows why ?
And all that is and is not, who knows how ?
Who knows ? God knows why day should live
and die.'

And Iseult mused and spake no word, but
sought

Through all the hushed ways of her tongue-
less thought

What face or covered likeness of a face
In what veiled hour or dream-determined
place

She seeing might take for love's face, and
believe

This was the spirit to whom all spirits cleave.
For that sweet wonder of the twain made one
And each one twain, incorporate sun with
sun,

Star with star molten, soul imbued,
And all the soul's works, all their multitude,
Made one thought and one vision and one
song,

Love—this thing, this, laid hand on her so
strong

She could not choose but yearn till she should
see.

So went she musing down her thoughts ; but
he.

Sweet-hearted as a bird that takes the sun
With clear strong eyes, and feels the glad god
run

Bright through his blood and wide rejoicing
wings,

And opens all himself to heaven and sings,
Made her mind light and full of noble mirth
With words and songs the gladdest grown on
earth,

Till she was blithe and high of heart as he.
So swam the Swallow through the springing
sea.

And while they sat at speech as at a feast,
Came a light wind fast hardening forth of the
east

And blackening till its might had marred the
skies .

And the sea thrilled as with heart-sundering
sighs

One after one drawn, with each breath it
drew,

And the green hardened into iron blue,
And the soft light went out of all its face.

Then Tristram girt him for an oarsman's
place

And took his oar and smote, and toiled with
might

In the east wind's full face and the strong
sea's spite

Labouring ; and all the rowers rowed hard,
but he

More mightily than any wearier three,
And Iseult watched him rowing with sinless
eyes

That loved him but in holy girlish wise
For noble joy in his fair manliness

And trust and tender wonder ; none the less
She thought if God had given her grace to
be

Man, and make war on danger of earth and
sea,

Even such a man she would be ; for his stroke
Was mightiest as the mightier water broke,
And in sheer measure like strong music drave
Clean through the wet weight of the wallow-
ing wave,

And as a tune before a great king played
For triumph was the tune their strong strokes
made,

And speed the ship through with smooth strife
of oars

Over the mid sea's grey foam-paven floors,
For all the loud breach of the waves at will.

So for an hour they fought the storm out
still,

And the shorn foam spun from the blades,
and high

The keel sprang from the wave-ridge, and
the sky

Glared at them for a breath's space through
the rain ;

Then the bows with a sharp shock plunged
again

Down, and the sea clashed on them, and so
rose

The bright stem like one panting from swift
blows,

And as a swimmer's joyous beaten head
Rears itself laughing, so in that sharp stead

The light ship lifted her long quivering bows
As might the man his buffeted strong brows

Out of the wave-breach ; for with one stroke
yet

Went all men's oars together, strongly set
As to loud music, and with hearts uplift

They smote their strong way through the
drench and drift.

Till the keen hour had chafed itself to death
And the east wind fell fitfully, breath by
breath,

Tired ; and across the thin and slackening
rain

Sprang the face southward of the sun again.
Then all they rested and were eased at heart ;

And Iseult rose up where she sat apart,
And with her sweet soul deepening her deep
eyes

Cast the furs from her and subtle embroid-
eries

That wrapped her from the storming rain and spray,
And shining like all April in one day,

Hair, face, and throat dashed with the straying showers,
She stood the first of all the whole world's flowers,

And laughed on Tristram with her eyes, and said,
'I too have heart then, I was not afraid.'

And answering some light courteous word of grace
He saw her clear face lighten on his face

Unwittingly, with unenamoured eyes,
For the last time. A live man in such wise
Looks in the deadly face of his fixed hour
And laughs with lips wherein he hath no power

To keep the life yet some five minutes' space.
So Tristram looked on Iseult face to face
And knew not, and she knew not. The last time—

The last that should be told in any rhyme
Heard anywhere on mouths of singing men
That ever should sing praise of them again ;
The last hour of their hurtless hearts at rest,

The last that peace should touch them breast to breast,

The last that sorrow far from them should sit,

This last was with them, and they knew not it.

For Tristram being athirst with toil now spake,
Saying, 'Iseult, for all dear love's labour's sake

Give me to drink, and give me for a pledge
The touch of four lips on the beaker's edge.'
And Iseult sought and would not wake Brangwain

Who slept as one half dead with fear and pain,
Being tender-natured ; so with hushed light feet

Went Iseult round her, with soft looks and sweet

Pitying her pain ; so sweet a spirited thing
She was, and daughter of a kindly king.

And spying what strange bright secret charge was kept

Fast in that maid's white bosom while she slept,

She sought and drew the gold cup forth and smiled

Marvelling, with such light wonder as a child
That hears of glad sad life in magic lands ;

And bare it back to Tristram with pure hands
Holding the love-draught that should be for flame

To burn out of them fear and faith and shame,
And lighten all their life up in men's sight,

And make them sad for ever. Then the knight
Bowed toward her and craved whence had she this strange thing

That might be spoil of some dim Asian king,
By starlight stolen from some waste place of sands,

And a maid bore it here in harmless hands.
And Iseult, laughing—'Other lords that be

Feast, and their men feast after them ; but we,
Our men must keep the best wine back to feast

Till they be full and we of all men least
Feed after them and fain to fare so well :
So with mine handmaid and your squire it fell

That hid this bright thing from us in a wile :'
And with light lips yet full of their swift smile

And hands that wist not though they dug a grave,
Undid the hasps of gold, and drank, and gave,

And he drank after, a deep glad kingly draught :
And all their life changed in them, for they quaffed

Death ; if it be death so to drink, and fare
As men who change and are what these twain were.

And shuddering with eyes full of fear and fire
And heart-strung with a serpentine desire

He turned and saw the terror in her eyes
That yearned upon him shining in such wise

As a star midway in the midnight fixed.
Their Galahault was the cup, and she that mixed ;

Nor other hand there needed, nor sweet speech
To lure their lips together ; each on each

Hung with strange eyes and hovered as a bird	[word ;	And they saw dark, though still the unsunken sun
Wounded, and each mouth trembled for a	Far through fine rain shot fire into the south ;	And their four lips became one burning mouth.
Their heads neared, and their hands were drawn in one,		

II.

THE QUEEN'S PLEASANCE.

Out of the night arose the second day, And saw the ship's bows break the shore- ward spray. As the sun's boat of gold and fire began To sail the sea of heaven unsailed of man, And the soft waves of sacred air to break Round the prow launched into the morning's lake, They saw the sign of their sea-travel done. Ah, was not something seen of yester-sun, When the sweet light that lightened all the skies Saw nothing fairer than one maiden's eyes, That whatsoever in all time's years may be To-day's sun nor to-morrow's sun shall see? Not while she lives, not when she comes to die Shall she look sunward with that sinless eye. Yet fairer now than song may show them stand Tristram and Iseult, hand in amorous hand, Soul-satisfied, their eyes made great and bright With all the love of all the livelong night ; With all its hours yet singing in their ears No mortal music made of thoughts and tears, But such a song, past conscience of man's thought, As hearing he grows god and knows it not. Nought else they saw nor heard but what the night Had left for seal upon their sense and sight, Sound of past pulses beating, fire of amorous light. Enough, and overmuch, and never yet Enough, though love still hungering feed and fret, To fill the cup of night which dawn must overset. For still their eyes were dimmer than with tears	And dizzier from diviner sounds their ears Than though from choral thunders of the quivering spheres. They heard not how the landward waters rang, Nor saw where high into the morning sprang, Riven from the shore and bastioned with the sea, Toward summits where the north wind's nest might be, A wave-walled palace with its eastern gate Full of the sunrise now and wide at wait, And on the mighty-moulded stairs that clomb Sheer from the fierce lip of the lapping foam The knights of Mark that stood before the wall. So with loud joy and storm of festival They brought the bride in up the towery way That rose against the rising front of day, Stair based on stair, between the rocks un- hewn, To those strange halls wherethrough the tidal tune Rang loud or lower from soft or strengthen- ing sea, Tower shouldering tower, to windward and to lee, With change of floors and stories, flight on flight, That clomb and curled up to the crowning height Whence men might see wide east and west in one And on one sea waned moon and mounting sun. And severed from the sea-rock's base, where stand Some worn walls yet, they saw the broken strand, The beachless cliff that in the sheer sea dips, The sleepless shore inexorable to ships,
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And the straight causeway's spare gaunt spine
between

The sea-spanned walls and naked mainland's
green.

On the mid stairs, between the light and dark,
Before the main tower's portal stood King
Mark,

Crowned : and his face was as the face of one
Long time athirst and hungering for the sun
In barren thrall of bitter bonds, who now
Thinks here to feel its blessing on his brow.
A swart lean man, but kinglike still of guise,
With black streaked beard and cold unquiet
eyes,

Close-mouthed, gaunt-cheeked, wan as a
morning moon,

Though hardly time on his worn hair had
strewn

The thin first ashes from a sparing hand :
Yet little fire there burnt upon the brand,
And way-worn seemed he with life's way-
faring.

So between shade and sunlight stood the king,
And his face changed nor yearned not toward
his bride ;

But fixed between mild hope and patient pride,
Abode what gift of rare or lesser worth
This day might bring to all his days on earth.
But at the glory of her when she came
His heart endured not : very fear and shame
Smote him, to take her by the hand and kiss,
Till both were molten in the burning bliss,
And with a thin flame flushing his cold face
He led her silent to the bridal place.

There were they wed and hallowed of the
priest ;

And all the loud time of the marriage feast
One thought within three hearts was as a fire,
Where craft and faith took counsel with desire.
For when the feast had made a glorious end
They gave the new queen for her maids to
tend

At dawn of bride-night and thereafter bring
With marriage music to the bridegroom king.
Then by device of craft between them laid
To him went Brangwain delicately, and
prayed

That this thing even for love's sake might
not be,

But without sound or light or eye to see
She might come in to bride-bed : and he
laughed,

As one that wist not well of wise love's craft,
And bade all bridal things be as she would
But of his gentleness he gat not good ;

For clothed and covered with the nuptial dark
Soft like a bride came Brangwain to King
Mark,

And to the queen came Tristram ; and the
night

Fled, and ere danger of detective light
From the king sleeping Brangwain slid away,
And where had lain her handmaid Iseult lay.
And the king waking saw beside his head
That face yet passion-coloured, amorous red
From lips not his, and all that strange hair
shed

Across the tissue pillows, fold on fold,
Innumerable, incomparable, all gold,
To fire men's eyes with wonder, and with love
Men's hearts ; so shone its flowering crown
above

The brows enwound with that imperial wreath,
And framed with fragrant radiance round the
face beneath.

And the king marvelled, seeing with sudden
start

Her very glory, and said out of his heart ;
' What have I done of good for God to bless
That all this he should give me, tress on tress,
All this great wealth and wondrous ? Was it
this

That in mine arms I had all night to kiss,
And mix with me this beauty ? this that seems
More fair than heaven doth in some tired
saint's dream,

Being part of that same heaven ? yea, more,
for he,

Though loved of God so, yet but seems to see,
But to me sinful such great grace is given
That in mine hands I hold this part of heaven
Not to mine eyes lent merely. Doth God
make

Such things so godlike for man's mortal sake ?
Have I not sinned, that in this fleshly life
Have made of her a mere man's very wife ?'

So the king mused and murmured ; and
she heard

The faint sound trembling of each breathless
word

And laughed into the covering of her hair.

And many a day for many a month as fair
Slid over them like music ; and as bright
Burned with love's offerings many a secret
night.

And many a dawn to many a fiery noon
Blew prelude, when the horn's heart-kindling
tune

Lit the live woods with sovereign sound of
mirth

Before the mightiest huntsman hailed on earth
 Lord of its lordliest pleasure, where he rode
 Hard by her rein whose peerless presence
 glowed
 Not as that white queen's of the virgin hunt
 Once, whose crown-crescent braves the night-
 wind's brunt,
 But with the sun for frontlet of a queenlier
 front.
 For where the flashing of her face was turned
 As lightning was the fiery light that burned
 From eyes and brows enkindled more with
 speed
 And rapture of the rushing of her steed
 Than once with only beauty ; and her mouth
 Was as a rose athirst that pants for drouth
 Even while it laughs for pleasure of desire,
 And all her heart was as a leaping fire.
 Yet once more joy they took of woodland
 ways
 Than came of all those flushed and fiery days
 When the loud air was mad with life and
 sound,
 Through many a dense green mile, of horn
 and hound
 Before the king's hunt going along the wind,
 And ere the timely leaves were changed or
 thinned,
 Even in mid maze of summer. For the
 knight
 Forth was once ridden toward some frontier
 fight
 Against the lewd folk of the Christless lands
 That warred with wild and intermittent hands
 Against the king's north border ; and there
 came
 A knight unchristened yet of unknown name,
 Swart Palamede, upon a secret quest,
 To high Tintagel, and abode as guest
 In likeness of a minstrel with a king.
 Nor was there man could sound so sweet a
 string,
 Save Tristram only, of all held best on earth.
 And one loud eve, being full of wine and
 mirth,
 Ere sunset left the walls and waters dark,
 To that strange minstrel strongly swore King
 Mark,
 By all that makes a knight's faith firm and
 strong,
 That he for guerdon of his harp and song
 Might crave and have his liking. Straight
 there came
 Up the swart cheek a flash of swarthier flame,
 And the deep eyes fulfilled of glittering night

Laughed out in lightnings of triumphant
 light
 As the grim harper spake : ' O king, I crave
 No gift of man that king may give to slave,
 But this thy crowned queen only, this thy
 wife,
 Whom yet unseen I loved, and set my life
 On this poor chance to compass, even as here,
 Being fairer famed than all save Guenevere.'
 Then as the noise of seaward storm that
 mocks
 With roaring laughter from reverberate rocks
 The cry from ships near shipwreck, harsh
 and high
 Rose all the wrath and wonder in one cry
 Through all the long roof's hollow depth and
 length
 That hearts of strong men kindled in their
 strength
 May speak in laughter lion-like, and cease,
 Being wearied : only two men held their
 peace
 And each glared hard on other ; but King
 Mark
 Spake first of these : " Man, though thy craft
 be dark
 And thy mind evil that begat this thing,
 Yet stands the word once plighted of a king
 Fast : and albeit less evil it were for me
 To give my life up than my wife, or be
 A landless man crowned only with a curse,
 Yet this in God's and all men's sight were
 worse,
 To live soul-shamed, a man of broken troth,
 Abhorred of men as I abhor mine oath
 Which yet I may forswear not.' And he
 bowed
 His head and wept : and all men wept aloud,
 Save one, that heard him weeping ; but the
 queen
 Wept not : and statelier yet than eyes had
 seen
 That ever looked upon her queenly state
 She rose, and in her eyes her heart was great
 And full of wrath seen manifest and scorn
 More strong than anguish to go thence for-
 lorn
 Of all men's comfort and her natural right.
 And they went forth into the dawn of night.
 Long by wild ways and clouded light they
 rode,
 Silent ; and fear less keen at heart abode
 With Isult than with Palamede : for awe
 Constrained him, and the might of love's
 high law,

That can make lewd men royal ; and his heart
 Yearned on her, if perchance with amorous art
 And soothfast skill of very love he might
 For courtesy find favor in her sight
 And comfort of her mercies : for he wist
 More grace might come of that sweet mouth
 unknissed
 Than joy for violence done it, that should
 make
 His name abhorred for shame's disloyal sake.
 And in the stormy starlight clouds were
 thinned
 And thickened by short gusts of changing
 wind
 That panted like a sick man's fitful breath :
 And like a moan of lions hurt to death
 Came the sea's hollow noise along the night.
 But ere its gloom from aught but foam had
 light
 They halted, being weary : and the knight
 As reverently forbore her where she lay
 As one that watched his sister's sleep till day.
 Nor durst he kiss or touch her hand or hair
 For love and shamefast pity, seeing how fair
 She slept, and fenceless from the fitful air.
 And shame at heart stung nigh to death de-
 sire,
 But grief at heart burned in him like a fire
 For hers and his own sorrowing sake, that
 had
 Such grace for guerdon as makes glad men
 sad,
 To have their will and want it. And the day
 Sprang : and afar along the wild waste way
 They heard the pulse and press of hurrying
 horse-hoofs play :
 And like the rushing of a ravenous flame
 Whose wings make tempest of the darkness,
 came
 Upon them headlong as in thunder borne
 Forth of the darkness of the labouring morn
 Tristram : and up forthright upon his steed
 Leapt, as one blithe of battle, Palamede,
 And mightily with shock of horse and man
 They lashed together : and fair that fight
 began
 As fair came up that sunrise : to and fro,
 With knees nigh staggered and stout heads
 bent low
 From each quick shock of spears on either
 side,
 Reeled the strong steeds heavily, haggard-
 eyed

And heartened high with passion of their
 pride
 As sheer the stout spears shocked again, and
 flew
 Sharp-splintering : then, his sword as each
 knight drew,
 They flashed and foined full royally, so long
 That but to see so fair a strife and strong
 A man might well have given out of his life
 One year's void space forlorn of love or strife.
 As when a bright north-easter, great of heart,
 Scattering the strengths of squadrons, hurls
 apart
 Ship from ship labouring violently, in such
 toil
 As ears but ruin—with even so strong recoil
 Back were the steeds hurled from the spear-
 shock, fair
 And foiled of triumph : then with tightened
 rein
 And stroke of spur, inveterate, either knight
 Broe in again upon his foe with might,
 Heart-hungry for the hot-mouthed feast of
 fight
 And all athirst of mastery : but full soon
 The jarring notes of that tempestuous tune
 Fell, and its mighty music made of hands
 Contending, clamorous through the loud waste
 lands,
 Broke at once off ; and shattered from his
 steed
 Fell, as a mainmast ruining, Palamede,
 Stunned : and those lovers left him where he
 lay,
 And lightly through green lawns they rode
 away.
 There was a bower beyond man's eye more
 fair
 Than ever summer dews and sunniest air
 Fed full with rest and radiance till the boughs
 Had wrought a roof as for a holier house
 Than aught save love might breathe in ;
 fairer far
 Than keeps the sweet light back of moon and
 star
 From high kings' chambers : there might
 love and sleep
 Divide for joy the darkling hours, and keep
 With amorous alternation of sweet strife
 The soft and secret ways of death and life
 Made smooth for pleasure's feet to rest and
 run
 Even from the moondawn to the kindling sun,
 Made bright for passion's feet to run and
 rest

Between the midnight's and the morning's
 breast,
 Where hardly though her happy head lie
 down
 It may forget the hour that wove its crown ;
 Where hardly though her joyous limbs he laid
 That may forget the mirth that midnight
 made.
 And thither, ere sweet night had slain sweet
 day,
 Iseult and Tristram took their wandering
 way,
 And rested, and refreshed their hearts with
 cheer
 In hunters' fashion of the woods ; and here
 More sweet it seemed, while this might be,
 to dwell
 And take of all world's weariness farewell
 Than reign of all world's lordship queen and
 king.
 Nor here would time for three moons' changes
 bring
 Sorrow nor thought of sorrow ; but sweet
 earth
 Fostered them like her babes of eldest birth,
 Reared warm in pathless woods and cherished
 well.
 And the sun sprang above the sea and fell,
 And the stars rose and sank upon the sea ;
 And outlaw-like, in forest wise and free,
 The rising and the setting of their lights
 Found those twain dwelling all those days
 and nights.
 And under the change of sun and star and
 moon
 Flourished and fell the chaplets woven of
 June,
 And fair through fervours of the deepening
 sky
 Panted and passed the hours that lit July,
 And each day blessed them out of heaven
 above,
 And each night crowned them with the crown
 of love.
 Nor till the might of August overhead
 Weighed on the world was yet one roseleaf
 shed
 Of all their joy's warm coronal, nor aught
 Touched them in passing ever with a thought
 That ever this might end on any day
 Or any night not love them where they lay ;
 But like a babbling tale of barren breath
 Seemed all report and rumour held of death,
 And a false bruit the legend tear-impearled
 That such a thing as change was in the world.

And each bright song upon his lips that came,
 Mocking the powers of change and death by
 name,
 Blasphemed their bitter godhead, and defied
 Time, though clothed round with ruin as
 kings with pride,
 To blot the glad life out of love : and she
 Drank lightly deep of his philosophy
 In that warm wine of amorous words which is
 Sweet with all truths of all philosophies.
 For well he wist all subtle ways of song,
 And in his soul the secret eye was strong
 That burns in meditation, till bright words
 Break flamelike forth as notes from fledgeling
 birds
 That feel the soul speak through them of the
 spring.
 So fared they night and day as queen and
 king
 Crowned of a kingdom wide as day and night.
 Nor ever cloudlet swept or swam in sight
 Across the darkling depths of their delight
 Whose stars no skill might number, nor
 man's art
 Sound the deep stories of its heavenly heart.
 Till, even for wonder that such life should
 live,
 Desires and dreams of what death's self
 might give
 Would touch with tears and laughter and
 with speech
 The lips and eyes of passion, fain to reach,
 Beyond all bourne of time or trembling sense,
 The verge of love's last possible eminence.
 Out of the heaven that storm nor shadow
 mars,
 Deep from the starry depth beyond the stars,
 A yearning ardour without scope or name
 Fell on them, and the bright night's breath
 of flame
 Shot fire into their kisses ; and like fire
 The lit dew's lightened on the leaves, as
 higher
 Night's heart beat on toward midnight. Far
 and faint
 Somewhiles the soft rush of rejoicing rain
 Solaced the darkness, and from steep to steep
 Of heaven they saw the sweet sheet lightning
 leap
 And laugh its heart out in a thousand smiles,
 When the clear sea for miles on glimmering
 miles
 Burned as though dawn were strewn abroad
 astray,
 Or, showering out of heaven all heaven's array

Had paven instead the waters : fain and far
Somewhiles the burning love of star for star
Spake words that love might wellnigh seem
to hear

In such deep hours as turn delight to fear
Sweet as delight's self ever. So they lay
Tranced once, nor watched along the fiery
bay

The shrine of summer darkness palpitae and
play.

She had nor sight nor voice ; her swooning
eyes

Knew not if night or light were in the skies ;
Across her beauty sheer the moon dawn shed
Its light as on a thing as white and dead ;
Only with stress of soft fierce hands she prest
Between the throbbing blossoms of her breast
His ardent face, and through his hair her
breath

Went quivering as when life is hard on death ;
And with strong trembling fingers she strained
fast

His head into her bosom ; till at last,
Sate with sweetness of that burning bed,
His eyes afire with tears, he raised his head
And laughed into her lips ; and all his heart
Filled hers ; then face from face fell, and
apart

Each hung on each with panting lips, and felt
Sense into sense and spirit in spirit melt.

'Hast thou no sword ? I would not live
till day ;

O love, this night and we must pass away,
It must die soon, and let not us die late.'

'Take then my sword and slay me ; nay,
but wait

Till day be risen ; what, wouldst thou think
to die

Before the light take hold upon the sky ?'

'Yea, love ; for how shall we have twice,
being twain,

This very night of love's most rapturous
reign ?

Live thou and have thy day, and year by year
Be great, but what shall I be ? Slay me here ;
Let me die not when love lies dead, but now
Strike through my heart : nay, sweet, what
heart hast thou ?

Is it too much I ask thee, and spend my
breath

In asking ? nay, thou knowest it is but death.
Hadst thou true heart to love me, thou
wouldst give

This : but for hate's sake thou wilt let me
live.'

Here he caught up her lips with his, and
made

The wild prayer silent in her heart that
prayed,

And strained her to him till all her faint
breath sank

And her bright light limbs palpitated and
shrank

And rose and fluctuated as flowers in rain
That bend them and they tremble and rise
again

And heave and straighten and quiver all
through with bliss

And turn afresh their mouths up for a kiss,
Amorous, athirst of that sweet influent love ;
So, hungering toward his hovering lips above,
Her red-rose mouth yearned silent, and her
eyes

Closed, and flashed after, as though June's
darkest skies

The divine heartbeats of the deep live light

Make open and shut the gates of the outer
night.

Long lay they still, subdued with love, nor
knew

If cloud or light changed colour as it grew.

If star or moon beheld them ; if above

The heaven of night waxed fiery with their
love,

Or earth beneath were moved at heart and
root

To burn as they, to burn and bring forth fruit
Unseasonable for love's sake ; if tall trees

Bowed, and close flowers yearned open, and
the breeze

Failed and fell silent as a flame that fails :

And all that hour unheard the nightingales

Clamoured, and all the woodland soul was
stirred,

And depth and height were one great song
unheard,

As though the world caught music and took
fire

From the instant heart alone of their desire.

So sped their night of nights between
them . so,

For all fears past and shadows, shine and
snow,

That one pure hour all-golded where they lay
Made their life perfect and their darkness day.

And warmer waved its harvest yet to reap,

Till in the lovely fight of love and sleep

At length had sleep the mastery ; and the dark
Was lit with soft live gleams they might not
mark,

<p>Fleet butterflies, each like a dead flower's ghost, White, blue, and sere leaf-coloured ; but the most White as the sparkle of snow-flowers in the sun Ere with his breath they lie at noon undone Whose kiss devours their tender beauty, and leaves But raindrops on the grass and sere thin leaves That were engraven with traceries of the snow Flowerwise ere any flower of earth's would blow ; So swift they sprang and sank, so sweet and light They swam the deep dim breathless air of night. Now on her rose-white amorous breast half bare, Now on her slumberous love-dishevelled hair, The white wings lit and vanished, and afresh Lit soft as snow lights on her snow-soft flesh, On hand or throat or shoulder ; and she stirred Sleeping, and spake some tremulous bright word, And laughed upon some dream too sweet for truth, Yet not so sweet as very love and youth</p>	<p>That there had charmed her eyes to sleep at last. Nor woke they till the perfect night was past, And the soft sea thrilled with blind hope of light. But ere the dusk had well the sun in sight He turned and kissed her eyes awake and said, Seeing earth and water neither quick nor dead And twilight hungering toward the day to be, 'As the dawn loves the sunlight I love thee.' And even as rays with cloudlets in the skies Confused in brief love's bright contentious wise, Sleep strove with sense rekindling in her eyes ; And as the flush of birth scarce overcame The pale pure pearl of unborn light with flame Soft as may touch the rose's heart with shame To break not all reluctant out of bud, Stole up her sleeping cheek her waking blood ; And with the lovely laugh of love that takes The whole soul prisoner ere the whole sense wakes, Her lips for love's sake bade love's will be done. And all the sea lay subject to the sun.</p>
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III.

TRISTRAM IN BRITTANY.

<p>"As the dawn loves the sunlight I love thee ;" As men that shall be swallowed of the sea Love the sea's lovely beauty ; as the night That wanes before it loves the young sweet light, And dies of loving ; as the worn-out noon Loves twilight, and as twilight loves the moon That on its grave a silver seal shall set— We have loved and slain each other, and love yet.</p>	<p>Slain ; for we live not surely, being in twain : In her I lived, and in me she is slain, Who loved me that I brought her to her doom, Who loved her that her love might be my tomb. As all the streams on earth and all fresh springs And sweetest waters, every brook that sings, Each fountain where the young year dips its wings</p>
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First, and the first-fledged branches of it
 wave,
 Even with one heart's love seek one bitter
 grave.
 From hills that first see bared the morning's
 breast,
 And heights the sun last yearns to from the
 west,
 All tend but toward the sea, all born most
 high
 Strive downward, passing all things joyous
 by,
 Seek to it and cast their lives in it and die.
 So strive all lives for death which all lives
 win;
 So sought her soul to my soul, and therein
 Was poured and perished : O my love, and
 mine
 Sought to thee and died of thee and died as
 thine.
 As the dawn loves the sunlight that must
 cease
 Ere dawn again may rise and pass in peace ;
 Must die that she being dead may live
 again,
 To be by his new rising nearly slain.
 So rolls the great wheel of the great world
 round,
 And no change in it and no fault is found,
 And no true life of perdurable breath,
 And surely no irrevocable death.
 Day after day night comes that day may
 break,
 And day comes back for night's reiterate
 sake.
 Each into each dies, each of each is born :
 Day past is night, shall night past not be
 morn ?
 Out of this moonless and faint-hearted night
 That love yet lives in, shall there not be
 light ?
 Light strong as love, that love may live in
 yet ?
 Alas, but how shall foolish hope forget
 How all these loving things that kill and die
 Meet not but for a breath's space and pass
 by ?
 Night is kissed once of dawn and dies, and
 day
 But touches twilight and is rapt away.
 So may my love and her love meet once
 more,
 And meeting be divided as of yore.
 Yea, surely as the day-star loves the sun
 And when he hath risen is utterly undone,

So is my love of her and hers of me—
 And its most sweetness bitter as the sea.
 Would God yet dawn might see the sun and
 die !'
 Three years had looked on earth and passed
 it by
 Since Tristram looked on Iseult, when he
 stood
 So communing with dreams of evil and good,
 And let all sad thoughts through his spirit
 sweep
 As leaves through air or tears through eyes
 that weep
 Or snowflakes through dark weather : and his
 soul,
 That had seen all those sightless seasons roll
 One after one, wave over weary wave,
 Was in him as a corpse is in its grave.
 Yet, for his heart was mighty, and his might
 Through all the world as a great sound and
 light,
 The mood was rare upon him ; save that here
 In the low sundawn of the lightening year
 With all last year's toil and its triumph done
 He could not choose but yearn for that set sun
 Which at this season saw the firstborn kiss
 That made his lady's mouth one fire with his.
 Yet his great heart being greater than his
 grief
 Kept all the summer of his strength in leaf
 And all the rose of his sweet spirit in flower ;
 Still his soul fed upon the sovereign hour
 That had been or that should be ; and once
 more
 He looked through drifted sea and drifting
 shore
 That crumbled in the wave-breach, and again
 Spake sad and deep within himself : ' What
 pain
 Should make a man's soul wholly break and
 die,
 Sapped as weak sand by water ? How shall I
 Be less than all less things are that endure
 And strive and yield when time is ? Nay,
 full sure
 All these and we are parts of one same end ;
 And if through fire or water we twain tend
 To that sure life where both must be made one,
 If one we be, what matter ? Thou, O sun,
 The face of God, if God thou be not—nay,
 What but God should I think thee, what
 should say,
 Seeing thee risen, but very God ?—should
 I,
 I fool, rebuke thee sovereign in thy sky,

The clouds dead round thee and the air alive,
The winds that lighten and the waves that
strive
Toward this shore as to that beneath thy
breath,
Because in me my thoughts bear all towards
death?

O sun, that when we are dead wilt rise as
bright,
Air deepening up toward heaven, and name-
less light,
And heaven immeasurable, and faint clouds
blown

Between us and the lowest aerial zone
And each least skirt of their imperial state—
Forgive us that we held ourselves so great!
What should I do to curse you? I indeed
Am a thing meaner than this least wild seed
That my foot bruises and I know not—yet
Would not be mean enough for worms to fret
Before their time and mine was.

‘Ah, and ye

Light washing weeds, blind waifs of dull
blind sea,

Do ye so thirst and hunger and aspire,
Are ye so moved with such long strong desire
In the ebb and flow of your sad life, and strive
Still toward some end ye shall not see alive—
But at high noon ye know it by light and heat
Some half-hour, till ye feel the fresh tide beat
Up round you, and at night’s most bitter noon
The ripples leave you naked to the moon?
And this dim dusty heather that I tread,
These half-born blossoms, born at once and
dead,

Sere brown as funeral cloths, and purple as
pall,

What if some life and grief be in them all?

‘Ay, what of these? but, O strong sun! O
sea!

I bid not you, divine things! comfort me,
I stand not up to match you in your sight—
Who hath said ye have mercy toward us, ye
who have might?

And though ye had mercy, I think I would
not pray

That ye should change your counsel or your
way

To make our life less bitter: if such power
Be given the stars on one deciduous hour,
And such might be in planets to destroy
Grief and rebuild, and break and build up joy,
What man would stretch forth hand on them
to make

Fate mutable, God foolish, for his sake?

For if in life or death be aught of trust,
And if some unseen just God or unjust
Put soul into the body of natural things
And in time’s pauseless feet and worldwide
wings

Some spirit of impulse and some sense of
will

That steers them through the seas of good
and ill

To some incognizable and actual end,
Be it just or unjust, foe to man or friend,
How should we make the stable spirit to
swerve,

How teach the strong soul of the world to
serve,

The imperious will in time and sense in space
That gives man life turn back to give man
place—

The conscious law lose conscience of its
way,

The rule and reason fail from night and day,
The streams flow back toward whence the
springs began,

That less of thirst might sear the lips of man?
Let that which is be, and sure strengths stand
sure,

And evil or good and death or life endure,
Not alterable and rootless, but indeed
A very stem born of a very seed

That brings forth fruit in season: how should
this

Die that was sown, and that not be which is,
And the old fruit change that came of the
ancient root,

And he that planted bid it not bear fruit,
And he that watered smite his vine with
drouth

Because its grapes are bitter in our mouth,
And he that kindled quench the sun with
night

Because its beams are fire against our sight,
And he that tuned untune the sounding
spheres

Because their song is thunder in our ears,
How should the skies change and the stars,
and time

Break the large concord of the years that
chime,

Answering, as wave to wave beneath the
moon

That draws them shoreward, mar the whole
tide’s tune

For the instant foam’s sake on one turning
wave—

For man’s sake that is grass upon a grave?

How should the law that knows not soon or late,
For whom no time nor space is—how should fate,

That is not good nor evil, wise nor mad,
Nor just nor unjust, neither glad nor sad—
How should the one thing that hath being, the one

That moves not as the stars move or the sun
Or any shadow or shape that lives or dies
In likeness of dead earth or living skies,
But its own darkness and its proper light
Clothe it with other names than day or night,
And its own soul of strength and spirit of breath

Feed it with other powers than life or death—
How should it turn from its great way to give
Man that must die a clearer space to live?
Why should the waters of the sea be cleft,
The hills be molten to his right and left,
That he from deep to deep might pass dry-shod,

Or look between the viewless heights on God?

Hath he such eyes as, when the shadows flee,
The sun looks out with to salute the sea?
Is his hand bounteous as the morning's hand?
Or where the night stands hath he feet to stand

Will the storm cry not when he bids it cease?
Is it his voice that saith to the east wind, Peace!

Is his breath mightier than the west wind's breath?

Doth his heart know the things of life and death?

Can his face bring forth sunshine and give rain,

Or his weak will that dies and lives again
Make one thing certain or bind one thing fast,

That as he willed it shall be at the last?
How should the storms of heaven and kindled lights

And all the depths of things and topless heights

And air and earth and fire and water change
Their likeness, and the natural world grow strange,

And all the limits of their life undone
Lose count of time and conscience of the sun,
And that fall under which was fixed above,
That man might have a larger hour for love?

So musing with close lips and lifted eyes
That smiled with self-contempt to live so wise,

With silent heart so hungry now so long,
So late grown clear, so miserably made strong,

About the wolds a banished man he went,
The brown wolds bare and sad as banishment,

By wastes of fruitless flowerage, and grey downs

That felt the sea-wind shake their wild-flower crowns

As though fierce hands would pluck from some grey head

The spoils of majesty despised and dead,
And fill with crying and comfortless strange sound

Their hollow sides and heights of herbless ground.

Yet as he went fresh courage on him came,
Till dawn rose too within him as a flame,
The heart of the ancient hills and his were one;

The winds took counsel with him, and the sun

Spake comfort; in his ears the shout of birds
Was as the sound of clear sweet-spirited words,

The noise of streams as laughter from above
Of the old wild lands, and as a cry of love
Spring's trumpet-blast blown over moor and lea:

The skies were red as love is, and the sea
Was as the floor of heaven for love to tread.
So went he as with light about his head,
And in the joyous travail of the year
Grew April-hearted; since nor grief nor fear

Can master so a young man's blood so long
That it shall move not to the mounting song
Of that sweet hour when earth replumes her wings

And with fair face and heart set heavenward sings

As an awakened angel unaware
That feels his sleep fall from him, and his hair

By some new breath of wind and music stirred,

Till like the sole song of one heavenly bird
Sounds all the singing of the host of heaven,
And all the glories of the sovereign Seven

Are as one face of one incorporate light,
And as that host of singers in God's sight
Might draw toward one that slumbered, and arouse

The lips quickened and rekindling brows,

So seemed the earthly host of all things born
In sight of spring and eyeshot of the morn,
All births of land or waifs of wind and sea,
To draw toward him that sorrowed, and set free

From presage and remembrance of all pains
The life that leapt and lightened in his veins.
So with no sense abashed nor sunless look,
But with exalted eyes and heart, he took
His part of sun or storm-wind, and was glad,
For all things lost, of these good things he had.

And the spring loved him surely, being
from birth

One made out of the better part of earth,
A man born as at sunrise ; one that saw
Not without reverence and sweet sense of
awe

But wholly without fear of fitful breath
The face of life watched by the face of death ;
And living took his fill of rest and strife,
Of love and change, and fruit and seed of life,

And when his time to live in light was done
With unbent head would pass out of the sun :
A spirit as morning, fair and clear and strong,
Whose thought and work were as one harp
and song

Heard through the world as in a strange
king's hall

Some great guest's voice that sings of festival.
So seemed all things to love him, and his
heart

In all their joy of life to take such part,
That with the live earth and the living sea
He was as one that communed mutually
With naked heart to heart of friend to friend ;
And the star deepening at the sunset's end,
And the moon fallen before the gate of day
As one sore wearied with vain length of way,
And the winds wandering, and the streams
and skies,

As faces of his fellows in his eyes.
Nor lacked there love where he was evermore
Of man and woman, friend of sea or shore,
Not measurable with weight of graven gold,
Free as the sun's gift of the world to hold
Given each day back to man's reconquering
sight

That loses but its lordship for a night.
And now that after many a season spent
In barren ways and works of banishment,
Toil of strange fights and many a fruitless
field,

Ventures of quest and vigils under shield,

He came back to the strait of Sundering sea
That parts green Cornwall from grey Brittany,
Where dwelt the high king's daughter of the
lands,

Iscult, named away from her fair white hands,
She looked on him and loved him ; but being
young

Made shamefastness a seal upon her tongue,
And on her heart, that none might hear its
cry,

Set the sweet signet of humility.

Yet when he came a stranger in her sight,
A banished man and weary, no such knight
As when the Swallow dipped her bows in foam.
Steered singing that imperial Iscult home,
This maiden with her sinless sixteen years
Full of sweet thoughts and hopes that played
at fears

Cast her eyes on him but in courteous wise,
And lo, the man's face burned upon her eyes
As though she had turned them on the naked
sun :

And through her limbs she felt sweet passion
run

As fire that flowed down from her face, and
beat

Soft through stirred veins on even to her hands
and feet

As all her body were one heart on flame,
Athrob with love and wonder and sweet
shame.

And when he spake there sounded in her ears
As 'twere a song out of the graves of years
I heard and again forgotten, and again
Remembered with a rapturous pulse of pain.
But as the maiden mountain snow sublime
Takes the first sense of April's trembling
time

Soft on a brow that burns not though it
blush

To feel the sunrise hardly half afush,
So took her soul the sense of change, nor
thought

That more than maiden love was more than
nought.

Her eyes went hardly after him, her cheek
Grew scarce a goodlier flower to hear him
speak,

Her bright mouth no more trembled than a
rose

May for the least wind's breathless sake that
blows

Too soft to sue save for a sister's kiss,
And if she sighed in sleep she knew not
this.

Yet in her heart hovered the thoughts of things

Past, that with lighter or with heavier wings
Beat round her memory, till it burned
With grief that brightened and with hope
yearned,

Seeing him so great and sad, nor knowing
what fate

Had bowed and crowned a head so sad and
great.

Nor might she guess but little, first or last,
Though all her heart so hung upon his past,
Of what so bowed him for what sorrow's
sake :

For scarce of aught at any time he spake
That from his own land oversea had sent
His lordly life to barren banishment.

Yet still or soft or keen remembrance clung
Close round her of the least word from his
tongue

That fell by chance of courtesy, to greet
With grace of tender thanks her pity, sweet
As running streams to men's way-wearied
feet.

And when between strange words her name
would fall

Suddenly straightway to that lure's recall
Back would his heart bound as the falconer's
bird

And tremble and bow down before the word.
'Iseult'—and all the cloudlike world grew
flame,

And all his heart flashed lightning at her
name ;

'Iseult'—and all the wan waste weary skies
Shone as his queen's own love-enkindled eyes.
And seeing the bright blood in his face leap
up

As red wine mantling in a royal cup
To hear the sudden sweetness of the sound
Ring, but ere well his heart had time to
bound

His cheek would change, and grief bow down
his head,

'Haply,' the girl's heart, though she spake
not, said,

'This name of mine was worn of one long
dead,

Some sister that he loved : ' and therewithal
Would pity bring her heart more deep in
thrall.

But once, when winds about the world made
mirth,

And March held revel hard on April's birth
Till air and sea were jubilant as earth,

Delight and doubt in sense and soul began,
And yearning of the maiden toward the man,
Harping on high before her : for his word
Was fire that kindled in her heart that heard,
And alway through the rhymes reverberate
came

The virginal soft burden of her name.

And ere the full song failed upon her ear
Joy strove within her till it cast out fear,
And all her heart was as his harp, and rang
Swift music, made of hope whose birthnote
sprang

Bright in the blood that kindled as he sang.

'Stars know not how we call them, nor may flowers
Know by what happy name the hovering hours
Baptize their new-born heads with dew and
flame :

And Love, adored of all time as of ours,
Iseult, knew nought for ages of his name.

'With many tongues men called on him, but he
Wist not which word of all might worthiest be
To sound for ever in his ear the same,
Till heart of man might hear and soul might see,
Iseult, the radiance ringing from thy name.

'By many names men called him, as the night
By many a name calls many a starry light,
Her several sovereigns of dividual fame ;
But day by one name only calls aright,
Iseult, the sun that bids men praise his name

'In many a name of man his name soared high
And song shone round it soaring, till the sky
Rang rapture, and the world's fast-founded
frame

Trembled with sense of triumph, even as I,
Iseult, with sense of worship at thy name.

'In many a name of woman smiled his power
Incarnate, as all summer in a flower,
Till winter bring forgetfulness or shame :
But thine, the keystone of his topless tower,
Iseult, is one with Love's own lordliest name.

'Iseult my love, Iseult my queen twice crowned,
In thee my death, in thee my life lies bound
Names are there yet that all men's hearts acclaim,
But Love's own heart rings answer to the sound,
Iseult, that bids it bow before thy name.'

There ceased his voice yearning upon the
word,

Struck with strong passion dumb : but she
that heard

Quailed to the heart, and trembled ere her
eyes

Durst let the loying light within them rise,
And yearn on his for answer : yet at last,
Albeit not all her fear was overpast,
Hope, kindling even the frost of fear apace

With sweet fleet bloom and breath of gradual
 grace,
 Flushed in the changing roses of her face.
 And ere the strife took truce of white with
 red,
 Or joy for soft shame's sake durst lift up head,
 Something she would and would not fain have
 said, [be,
 And wist not what the fluttering word would
 But rose and reached forth to him her hand :
 and he,

Heart-stricken, bowed his head and dropped
 his knee.
 And on her fragrant hand his lips were
 fire ;
 And their two hearts were as one trembling
 lyre
 Touched by the keen wind's kiss with brief
 desire
 And music shuddering at its own delight.
 So dawned the moonrise of their marriage
 night.

IV.

THE MAIDEN MARRIAGE.

SPRING watched her last moon burn and fade
 with May
 While the days deepened toward a bridal day.
 And on her snowbright hand the ring was set
 While in the maiden's ear the song's word yet
 Hovered, that hailed as love's own queen by
 name
 Iseult : and in her heart the word was flame ;
 A pulse of light, a breath of tender fire,
 Too dear for doubt, too driftless for desire.
 Between her father's hand and brother's led
 From hall to shrine, from shrine to marriage-
 bed,
 She saw not how by hap at home-coming
 Fell from her new lord's hand a royal ring,
 Whereon he looked, and felt the pulse astart
 Speak passion in his faith-forsaken heart.
 For this was given him of the hand wherewith
 That heart's pledge lay for ever : so the sin
 That should be done if truly he should take
 This maid to wife for strange love's faithless
 sake
 Struck all his mounting spirit abashed, and
 fear
 Fell cold for shame's sake on his changing
 cheer.
 Yea, shame's own fire that burned upon his
 brow
 To bear the brand there of a broken vow
 Was frozen again for very fear thereof
 That wrung his heart with keener pangs than
 love.

And all things rose upon him, all things past
 Ere last they parted, cloven in twain at last,
 Iseult from Tristram, Tristram from the
 queen ;
 And how men found them in the wild woods
 green
 Sleeping, but sundered by the sword between,
 Dividing breast from anorous breast a span,
 But scarce in heart the woman from the man
 As far as hope from joy or sleep from truth,
 And Mark that saw them held for sacred
 sooth
 These were no fleshly lovers, by that sign
 That severed them, still slumbering ; so di-
 vine
 He deemed it : how at waking they beheld
 The king's folk round the king, and uncom-
 pelled
 Were fain to follow and fare among them
 home
 Back to the towers washed round with rolling
 foam
 And storied halls wherethrough sea-music
 rang :
 And how report thereafter swelled and sprang,
 A full-mouthed serpent, hissing in men's ears
 Word of their loves : and one of all his peers
 That most he trusted, being his kinsman born,
 A man base-moulded for the stamp of scorn,
 Whose heart with hate was keen and cold
 and dark,
 Gave note by midnight whisper to King Mark

Where he might take them sleeping ; how ere
day

Had seen the grim next morning all away
Fast bound they brought him down a weary
way

With forty knights about him, and their chief
That traitor who for trust had given him grief,
To the old hoar chapel, like a strait stone
tomb

Sheer on the sea-rocks, there to take his
doom :

How, seeing he needs must die, he bade them
yet

Bethink them if they durst for shame forget
What deeds for Cornwall had he done, and
wrought

For all their sake what rescue, when he
fought

Against the fierce foul Irish foe that came
To take of them for tribute in their shame
Three hundred heads of children ; whom in
fight

His hand redeeming slew Moraunt the knight
That none durst lift his eyes against, not one
Had heart but he, who now had help of none,
To take the battle ; whence great shame it
were

To knighthood, yea, foul shame on all men
there,

To see him die so shamefully : nor durst
One man look up, nor one make answer first,
Save even the very traitor, who defied
And would have slain him naked in his pride,
But he, that saw the sword plucked forth to
slay,

Looked on his hands and wrenched their
bonds away,

Haling those twain that he went bound be-
tween

Suddenly to him, and kindling in his mien
Shone lion-fashion forth with eyes alight,
And lion-wise leapt on that kinsman knight
And wrung forth of his felon hands with
might

The sword that should have slain him weapon-
less

And smote him sheer down : then came all
the press

All raging in upon him , but he wrought
So well for his deliverance as they fought
That ten strong knights rejoicingly he slew,
And took no wound, nor wearied : then the
crew

Waxed greater, and their cry on him ; but he
Had won the chapel now above the sea

That chafed right under : then the heart in
him

Sprang, seeing the low cliff clear to leap, and
swim

Right out by the old blithe way the sea-mew
takes

Across the bounding billow-belt that breaks
For ever, but the loud bright chain it makes
To bind the bridal bosom of the land

Time shall unlink not ever, till his hand
Fall by its own last blow dead : thence again

Might he win forth into the green great main
Far on beyond, and there yield up his breath
At least, with God's will, by no shameful
death,

Or haply save himself, and come anew
Some long day later, ere sweet life were
through.

And as the sea-gull hovers high, and turns
With eyes wherein the keen heart glittering
years

Down toward the sweet green sea whereon
the broad noon burns,

And suddenly, soul-stricken with delight,
Drops, and the glad wave gladdens, and the
light

Sees wing and wave confuse their fluttering
white,

So Tristram one brief breathing-space apart
Hung, and gazed down ; then with exulting
heart

Plunged : and the fleet foam round a joyous
head

Flashed, that shot under, and ere a shaft had
sped

Rose again radiant, a rejoicing star,
And high along the water-ways afar

Triumphed : and they deemed he needs must
die ;

But Gouvernaye his squire, that watched
hard by,

Sought where perchance a man might win
ashore,

Striving, with strong limbs labouring long
and sore,

And there abode an hour : till as from fight
Crowned with hard conquest won by master-
ing might,

Hardly, but happier for the imperious toil,
Swam the knight in forth of the close waves'
coil,

Sea-satiate, bruised with buffets of the brine,
Laughing, and flushed as one afire with wine :
All this came hard upon him in a breath ;

And how he marvelled in his heart that death

Should be no bitterer than it seemed to be
 There, in the strenuous impulse of the sea
 Born as to battle deathward : and at last
 How all his after seasons overpast
 Had brought him darkling to this dark sweet
 hour,
 Where his foot faltered nigh the bridal bower,
 And harder seemed the passage now to pass,
 Though smoother-seeming than the still sea's
 glass,
 More fit for very manhood's heart to fear,
 Than all straits past of peril. Hardly here
 Might aught of all things hearten him save
 one,
 Faith : and as men's eyes quail before the
 sun
 So quailed his heart before the star whose
 light
 Put out the torches of his bridal night,
 So quailed and shrank with sense of faith's
 keen star
 That burned as fire beheld by night afar
 Deep in the darkness of his dreams ; for all
 The bride-house now seemed hung with
 heavier pall
 Than clothes the house of mourning. Yet
 at last,
 Soul-sick with trembling at the heart, he
 passed
 Into the sweet light of the maiden bower
 Where lay the lonely lily-featured flower
 That, lying within his hand to gather, yet
 Might not be gathered of it. Fierce regret
 And bitter loyalty strove hard at strife
 With amorous pity toward the tender wife
 That wife indeed might never be, to wear
 The very crown of wedlock ; never bear
 Children, to watch and worship her white hair
 When time should change, with hand more
 soft than snow,
 The fashion of its glory ; never know
 The loveliness of laughing love that lives
 On little lips of children : all that gives
 Glory and grace and reverence and delight
 To wedded woman by her bridal right,
 All praise and pride that flowers too fair to
 fall,
 Love that should give had stripped her of
 them all
 And left her bare for ever. So his thought
 Consumed him, as a fire within that wrought
 Visibly, ravening till its wrath were spent :
 So pale he stood, so bowed and passion-rent,
 Before the blithe-faced bride-folk, ere he
 went

Within the chamber, heavy-eyed : and there
 Gleamed the white hands and glowed the
 glimmering hair
 That might but move his memory more of
 one more fair,
 More fair than all this beauty : but in sooth
 So fair she too shone in her flower of youth
 That scarcely might man's heart hold fast its
 truth,
 Though strong, who gazed upon her : for
 her eyes
 Were emerald-soft as evening-coloured skies,
 And a smile in them like the light therein
 Slept, or shone out in joy that knew not sin,
 Clear as a child's own laughter : and her
 mouth,
 Albeit no rose full-hearted from the south
 And passion-colored for the perfect kiss
 That signs the soul for love and stamps it his,
 Was soft and bright as any bud new-blown ;
 And through her cheek the gentler lifebloom
 shone
 Of mild wild roses nigh the northward sea.
 So in her bride-bed lay the bride : and he
 Drew nigh, and all the high sad heart in him
 Yearned on her, seeing the twilight meek and
 dim
 Through all the soft alcove tremblingly lit
 With hovering silver, as a heart in it
 Beating, that burned from one deep lamp
 above,
 Fainter than fire of torches, as the love
 Within him fainter than a bridegroom's fire,
 No marriage-torch red with the heart's desire,
 But silver-soft, a flameless light that glowed
 Starlike along night's dark and starry road
 Wherein his soul was traveller. And he
 sighed,
 Seeing, and with eyes set sadly toward his
 bride
 Laid him down by her, and spake not ; but
 within
 His heart spake, saying how sore should be
 the sin
 To break toward her, that of all womankind
 Was faithfullest, faith plighted, or unbind
 The bond first linked between them when
 they drank
 The love-draught : and his quick blood sprang
 and sank,
 Remembering in the pulse of all his veins
 That red swift rapture, all its fiery pains
 And all its fierier pleasures : and he spake
 Aloud, one burning word for love's keen
 sake—

'Iseult;' and full of love and lovelier fear
 A virgin voice gave answer—'I am here.'
 And a pang rent his heart at root: but still,
 For spirit and flesh were vassals to his will,
 Strong faith held mastery on them: and the
 breath
 Felt on his face did not his will to death,
 Nor glance nor lute-like voice nor flower-soft
 touch
 Might so prevail upon it overmuch
 That constancy might less prevail than they,
 For all he looked and loved her as she lay
 Smiling; and soft as bird alights on bough
 He kissed her maiden mouth and blameless
 brow,
 Once, and again his heart within him sighed.
 But all his young blood's yearning toward
 his bride,

How hard soe'er it held his life awake
 For passion, and sweet nature's unforbidden
 sake,
 And will that strove unwillingly with will it
 might not break,
 Fell silent as a wind abashed, whose breath
 Dies out of heaven, suddenly done to death,
 When in between them on the dumb dusk
 air
 Floated the bright shade of a face more
 fair
 Than hers that hard beside him shrank and
 smiled
 And wist of all no more than might a child.
 So had she all her heart's will, all she would,
 For love's sake that sufficed her, glad and
 good,
 All night safe sleeping in her maidenhood.

v.

ISEULT AT TINTAGEL.

BUT that same night in Cornwall oversea
 Couched at Queen Iseult's hand, against her
 knee,
 With keen kind eyes that read her whole
 heart's pain
 Fast at wide watch lay Tristram's hound
 Hodain,
 The goodliest and the mightiest born on earth,
 That many a forest day of fiery mirth
 Had plied his craft before them; and the
 queen
 Cherished him, even for those dim years be-
 tween,
 More than of old in those bright months far
 flown
 When ere a blast of Tristram's horn was
 blown
 Each morning as the woods rekindled, ere
 Day gat full empire of the glimmering air,
 Delight of dawn would quicken him, and fire
 Spring and pant in his breath with bright
 desire
 To be among the dewy ways on quest:
 But now perforce at restless-hearted rest

He chafed through days more barren than the
 sand,
 Soothed hardly but soothed only with her
 hand,
 Though fain to fawn thereon and follow, still
 With all his heart and all his loving will
 Desiring one divided from his sight,
 For whose lost sake dawn was as dawn of
 night
 And noon as night's noon in his eyes was dark.
 But in the halls far under sat King Mark,
 Feasting, and full of cheer, with heart uplift,
 As on the night that harper gat his gift:
 And music revelled on the fitful air,
 And songs came floated up the festal stair,
 And muffled roar of wassail, where the king
 Took heart from wine-cups and the quiring
 string
 Till all his cold thin veins rejoiced and ran
 Strong as with lifeblood of a kinglier man.
 But the queen shut from sound her wearied
 ears,
 Shut her sad eyes from sense of aught save
 tears,

And wrung her hair with soft fierce hands,
and prayed :

' O God, God born of woman, of a maid,
Christ, once in flesh of thine own fashion
clad ;

O very love, so glad in heaven and sad
On earth for earth's sake alway : since thou
art

Pure only, I only impure of spirit and heart,
Since thou for sin's sake and the bitter doom
Didst as a veil put on a virgin's womb,
I that am none, and cannot hear or see
Or shadow or likeness or a sound of thee
Far off, albeit with man's own speech and
face

Thou shine yet and thou speak yet, showing
forth grace—

Ah me ! grace only shed on souls that are
Lit and led forth of shadow by thy star—
Alas ! to these men only grace, to these,
Lord, whom thy love draws Godward, to thy
knees—

I, can I draw thee me-ward, can I seek,
Who love thee not, to love me ? seeing how
weak,

Lord, all this little love I bear thee is,
And how much is my strong love more than
this,

My love that I love man with, that I bear
Him sinning through me sinning ? wilt thou
care,

God, for this love, if love be any, alas,
In me to give thee, though long since there
was,

How long, when I too, Lord, was clean, even
I,

That now am unclean till the day I die—
Haply by burning, harlot-fashion, made
A horror in all hearts of wife and maid,
Hateful, not knowing if ever in these mine
eyes

Shone any light of thine in any wise
Or this were love at all that I bore thee ?

And the night spake, and thundered on the
sea,

Ravens aloud for ruin of lives : and all
The bastions of the main cliff's northward
wall

Rang response out from all their deepening
length,

As the east wind girded up his godlike
strength

And hurled in hard against that high-towered
hold

The fleeces of the flock that knows no fold,

The rent white shreds of shattering storm :
but she

Heard not nor heeded wind or storming sea,
Knew not if night were mild or mad with
wind.

' Yea, though deep lips and tender hair be
thinned,

Though cheek wither, brow fade, and bosom
wane,

Shall I change also from this heart again

To maidenhood of heart and holiness ?

Shall I more love thee, Lord, or love him
less—

Ah miserable ! though spirit and heart be
rent,

Shall I repent, Lord God ? shall I repent ?

Nay, though thou slay me ! for herein I am
blest,

That as I loved him yet I love him best—

More than mine own soul or thy love or thee,
Though thy love save and my love save not
me.

Blest am I beyond women even herein,

That beyond all born women is my sin,

And perfect my transgression : that above

All offerings of all others is my love,

Who have chosen it only, and put away for
this

Thee, and my soul's hope, Saviour, of the kiss
Wherewith thy lips make welcome all thine
own

When in them life and death are overthrown ;
The sinless lips that seal the death of sin,

The kiss wherewith their dumb lips touched
begin

Singing in heaven,

' Where we shall never, love,

Never stand up nor sing ! for God above

Knows us, how too much more than God to
me

Thy sweet love is, my poor love is to thee !

Dear, dost thou see now, dost thou hear to-
night,

Sleeping, my waste wild speech, my face worn
white,

—Speech once heard soft by thee, face once
kissed red !—

In such a dream as when men see their dead

And know not if they know if dead these be ?

Ah love, are thy days my days, and to thee

Are all nights like as my nights ? does the sun
Grieve thee ? art thou soul-sick till day be
done,

And weary till day rises ? is thine heart

Full of dead things as mine is ? Nay, thou art

Man, with man's strength and praise and
pride of life,

No bondwoman, no queen, no loveless wife
That would be shamed albeit she had not
sinned.'

And swordlike was the sound of the iron
wind,

And as a breaking battle was the sea.

'Nay, Lord, I pray thee let him love not
me,

Love me not any more, nor like me die,
And be no more than such a thing as I.

Turn his heart from me, lest my love too lose
Thee as I lose thee, and his fair soul refuse
For my sake thy fair heaven, and as I fell
Fall, and be mixed with my soul and with
hell.

Let me die rather, and only; let me be

Hated of him so he be loved of thee,

Lord: for I would not have him with me
there

Out of thy light and love in the unlit air,

Out of thy sight in the unseen hell where I

Go gladly, going alone, so thou on high

Lift up his soul and love him—Ah, Lord,
Lord,

Shalt thou love as I love him? she that
poured

From the alabaster broken at thy feet

An ointment very precious, not so sweet

As that poured likewise forth before thee then

From the rehallowed heart of Magdalen,

From a heart broken, yearning like the dove,

An ointment very precious which is love—

Couldst thou being holy and God, and sinful
she

Love her indeed as surely she loved thee?

Nay, but if not, then as we sinners can

Let us love still in the old sad wise of man.

For with less love than my love, having had

Mine, though God love him he shall not be
glad.

And with such love as my love, I wot well,

He shall not lie disconsolate in hell:

Sad only as souls for utter love's sake be

Here, and a little sad, perchance, for me—

Me happy, me more glad than God above,

In the utmost hell whose fires consume not
love!

For in the waste ways emptied of the sun

He would say—"Dear, thy place is void, and
one

Weeps among angels for thee, with his face
Veiled, saying, *O sister, how thy chosen
place*

*Stands desolate that God made fair for thee!
Is heaven not sweeter, and we thy brethren, we
Fairer than love on earth and life in hell?"*

And I—with me were all things then not
well?

Should I not answer—"O love, be well con-
tent;

Look on me, and behold if I repent."

This were more to me than an angel's wings.

Yea, many men pray God for many things,

But I pray that this only thing may be.'

And as a full field charging was the sea,

And as the cry of slain men was the wind.

'Yea, since I surely loved him, and he
sinned

Surely, though not as my sin his be black,

God, give him to me—God, God, give him
back!

For now how should we live in twain or die?

I am he indeed, thou knowest, and he is I.

Not man and woman several as we were,

But one thing with one life and death to bear,

How should one love his own soul overmuch?

And time is long since last I felt the touch,

The sweet touch of my lover, hand and
breath,

In such delight as puts delight to death,

Burn my soul through, till spirit and soul and
sense,

In the sharp grasp of the hour, with violence
Died, and again through pangs of violent
birth

Lived, and laughed out with refluxing might of
mirth;

Laughed each on other and shuddered into
one,

As a cloud shuddering dies into the sun.

Ah, sense is that or spirit, soul or flesh,

That only love lulls or awakes afresh?

Ah, sweet is that or bitter, evil or good,

That very love allays not as he would?

Nay, truth is this or vanity, that gives

No love assurance when love dies or lives?

This that my spirit is wrung withal, and yet

No surelier knows if haply thine forget,

Thou that my spirit is wrung for, nor can say

Love is not in thee dead as yesterday?

Dost thou feel, thou, this heartbeat whence
my heart

Would send thee word what life is mine apart,
And know by keen response what life is
thine?

Dost thou not hear one cry of all of mine?

O Tristram's heart, have I no part in thee?

And all her soul was as the breaking sea,

And all her heart anhungered as the wind.

'Dost thou repent thee of the sin we sinned?

Dost thou repent thee of the days and nights
That kindled and that quenched for us their
lights,

The months that feasted us with all their
hours,

The ways that breathed of us in all their
flowers,

The dells that sang of us with all their doves?
Dost thou repent thee of the wildwood loves?

Is thine heart changed, and hallowed? art
thou grown

God's and not mine? Yet, though my heart
make moan,

Fain would my soul give thanks for thine, if
thou

Be saved—yea, fain praise God, and knows
not how.

How should it know thanksgiving? nay, or
learn

Aught of the love wherewith thine own should
burn,

God's, that should cast out as an evil thing
Mine? yea, what hand of prayer have I to
cling,

What heart to prophesy, what spirit of sight
To strain insensual eyes toward increate light,
Who look but back on life wherein I sinned?'

And all their past came wailing in the wind,
And all their future thundered in the sea.

'But if my soul might touch the time to be,
If hand might handle now or eye behold

My life and death ordained me from of old,
Life palpable, compact of blood and breath,

Visible, present, naked, very death,
Should I desire to know before the day

These that I know not, nor is man that may?
For haply, seeing, my heart would break for

fear,
And my soul timeless cast its load off here,

Its load of life too bitter, love too sweet,
And fall down shamed and naked at thy feet,

God, who wouldst take no pity of it, nor give
One hour back, one of all its hours to live

Clothed with my mortal body, that once
more,

Once, on this reach of barren beaten shore,
This stormy strand of life, ere sail were set,

Had haply felt love's arms about it yet—
Yea, ere death's bark put off to seaward,

might
With many a grief have bought me one de-
light

That then should know me never. Ah, what
years

Would I endure not, filled up full with tears,
Bitter like blood and dark as dread of death,

To win one anorous hour of mingling breath,
One fire-eyed hour and sunnier than the

sun,
For all these nights and days like nights but
one?

One hour of heaven born once, a stormless
birth,

For all these windy weary hours of earth?
One, but one hour from birth of joy to death,

For all these hungering hours of feverish
breath?

And I should lose this, having died and
sinned.'

And as man's anguish clamouring cried the
wind,

And as God's anger answering rang the sea.
'And yet what life—Lord God, what life

for me
Has thy strong wrath made ready? Dost
thou think

How lips whose thirst hath only tears to
drink

Grow grey for grief untimely? Dost thou
know,

O happy God, how men wax weary of woe—
Yea, for their wrong's sake that thine hand

hath done
Come even to hate thy semblance in the sun?

Turn back from dawn and noon and all thy
light

To make their souls one with the soul of
night?

Christ, if thou hear yet or have eyes to see,
Thou that hadst pity, and hast no pity on me,

Know'st thou no more, as in this life's sharp
span,

What pain thou hadst on earth, what pain
hath man?

Hast thou no care, that all we suffer yet?
What help is ours of thee if thou forget?

What profit have we though thy blood were
given,

If we that sin bleed and be not forgiven?
Not love but hate, thou bitter God and

strange,
Whose heart as man's heart hath grown cold

with change,
Not love but hate thou showest us that have

sinned.'

And like a world's cry shuddering was the
wind,

And like a God's voice threatening was the sea.

'Nay, Lord, for thou wast gracious; nay, in thee

No change can come with time or varying fate,

No tongue bid thine be less compassionate,
No sterner eye rebuke for mercy thine,
No sin put out thy pity—no, not mine.

Thou knowest us, Lord, thou knowest us, all we are,

He, and the soul that hath his soul for star:
Thou knowest as I know, Lord, how much more worth

Than all souls clad and clasped about with earth,

But most of all, God, how much more than I,
Is this man's soul that surely shall not die.

What righteousness, what judgment, Lord most high,

Were this, to bend a brow of doom as grim
As threats me, me the adulterous wife, on him?

There lies none other nightly by his side:
He hath not sought, he shall not seek a bride

Far as God sunders earth from heaven above,
So far was my love born beneath his love.

I loved him as the sea-wind loves the sea,
To rend and ruin it only and waste: but he,

As the sea loves a sea-bird loved he me,
To foster and uphold my tired life's wing,

And bounteously beneath me spread forth spring,

A springtide space whereon to float or fly,
A world of happy water, whence the sky

Glowed goodlier, lightening from so glad a glass,

Than with its own light only. Now, alas!
Cloud hath come down and clothed it round

with storm,
And gusts and fits of eddying winds deform

The feature of its glory. Yet be thou,
God, merciful: nay, show but justice now,

And let the sin in him that scarce was his
Stand expiated with exile: and be this

The price for him, the atonement this, that I
With all the sin upon me live, and die

With all thy wrath on me that most have sinned.'

And like man's heart relenting sighed the wind,

And as God's wrath subsiding sank the sea.

'But if such grace be possible—if it be
Not sin more strange than all sins past, and worse

Evil, that cries upon thee for a curse,
To pray such prayers from such a heart, do thou

Hear, and make wide thine hearing toward me now;

Let not my soul and his for ever dwell
Sundered: though doom keep always heaven

and hell
Irreconcilable, infinitely apart,

Keep not in twain for ever heart and heart
That once, albeit by not thy law, were one;

Let this be not thy will, that this be done
Let all else, all thou wilt of evil, be,

But no doom, none, dividing him and me.'
By this was heaven stirred eastward, and

there came
Up the rough ripple a labouring light like

flame;
And dawn, sore trembling still and grey with fear,

Looked hardly forth, a face of heavier cheer
Than one which grief or dread yet half en-

shrouds,
Wild-eyed and wan, across the cleaving

clouds
And Iseult, worn with watch long held on

pain,
Turned, and her eye lit on the hound Hodain,

And all her heart went out in tears: and he
Laid his kind head along her bended knee,

Till round his neck her arms went hard, and all

The night past from her as a chain might fall:
But yet the heart within her, half undone,

Wailed, and was loth to let her see the sun.
And ere full day brought heaven and earth

to flower,
Far thence, a maiden in a marriage bower,

That moment, hard by Tristram, oversea,
Woke with glad eyes Iseult of Brittany.

VI.

JOYOUS GARD.

A LITTLE time, O Love, a little light,
A little hour for ease before the night.
Sweet Love, that art so bitter; foolish Love,
Whom wise men know for wiser, and thy
dove

More subtle than the serpent; for thy sake
These pray thee for a little beam to break,
A little grace to help them, lest men think
Thy servants have but hours like tears to
drink.

O Love, a little comfort, lest they fear
To serve as these have served thee who stand
here.

For these are thine, thy servants these, that
stand

Here nigh the limit of the wild north land,
At margin of the grey great eastern sea,
Dense-islanded with peaks and reefs, that see
No life but of the fleet wings fair and free
Which cleave the mist and sunlight all day
long

With sleepless flight and cries more glad than
song.

Strange ways of life have led him hither,
here

To win fleet respite from desire and fear,
With armistice from sorrow; strange and
sweet

Ways trodden by forlorn and casual feet
Till kindlier chance woke toward them kindly
will

In happier hearts of lovers, and their ill
Found rest, as healing surely might it not,
By gift and kingly grace of Launcelot
At gracious bidding given of Guenevere.
For in the trembling twilight of this year
Ere April sprang from hope to certitude
Two hearts of friends fast linked had fallen
at feud

As they rode forth on hawking, by the sign
Which gave his new bride's brother Ganhar-
dine

To know the truth of Tristram's dealing,
how

Faith kept of him against his marriage vow

Kept virginal his bride-bed night and morn;
Whereat, as wroth his blood should suffer
scorn,

Came Ganhardine to Tristram, saying, 'Be-
hold,

We have loved thee, and for love we have
shown of old

Scorn hast thou shown us: wherefore is thy
bride

Not thine indeed, a stranger at thy side,
Contemned? what evil hath she done, to be
Mocked with mouth-marriage and despised
of thee,

Shamed, set at nought, rejected?' But there
came

On Tristram's brow and eye the shadow and
flame

Confused of wrath and wonder, ere he spake,
Saying, 'Hath she bid thee for thy sister's
sake

Plead with me, who believed of her in heart
More nobly than to deem such piteous part
Should find so fair a player? or whence hast
thou

Of us this knowledge?' 'Nay,' said he, 'but
now,

Riding beneath these whitethorns overhead,
There fell a flower into her girdlestead

Which laughing she shook out, and smiling
said—

"Lo, what large leave the wind hath given
this stray,

To lie more near my heart than till this day
Aught ever since my mother lulled me lay
Or even my lord came ever;" whence I wot
We are all thy scorn, a race regarded not
Nor held as worth communion of thine
own,

Except in her be found some fault alone
To blemish our alliance.' Then replied

Tristram, 'Nor blame nor scorn may touch
my bride,

Albeit unknown of love she live, and be
Worth a man worthier than her love thought
me.

Faith only, faith withheld me, faith forbade
The blameless grace wherewith love's grace
makes glad

All lives linked else in wedlock; not that less
I loved the sweet light of her loveliness,
But that my love toward faith was more : and
thou,

Albeit thine heart be keen against me now,
Couldst thou behold my very lady, then
No more of thee than of all other men
Should this my faith be held a faithless fault.
And ere that day their hawking came to halt
Being sore of him entreated for a sign,
He sware to bring his brother Ganhardine
To sight of that strange Iseult : and thereon
Forth soon for Cornwall are these brethren
gone,

Even to that royal pleasance where the hunt
Rang ever of old with Tristram's horn in front
Blithe as the queen's horse bounded at his
side :

And first of all her dames forth pranced in
pride

That day before them, with a ringing rein
All golden-glad, the king's false bride Brang-
wain,

The queen's true handmaid ever : and on her
Glancing, ' Be called for all time truth-teller,
O Tristram, of all true men's tongues alive,'
Quoth Ganhardine ; ' for may my soul so
thrive

As yet mine eye drank never sight like this,'
' Ay?' Tristram said, ' and she thou look'st
on is

So great in grace of goodliness, that thou
Hast less thought left of wrath against me
now,

Seeing but my lady's handmaid? Nay, be-
hold ;

See'st thou no light more golden than of gold
Shine where she moves in midst of all, above
All, past all price or praise or prayer of love?
Lo, this is she.' But as one mazed with wine
Stood, stunned in spirit and stricken, Gan-
hardine,

And gazed out hard against them and his
heart

As with a sword was cloven, and rent apart
As with strong fangs of fire ; and scarce he
spake,

Saying how his life for even a handmaid's sake
Was made a flame within him. And the
knight

Bade him, being known of none that stood in
sight,

Bear to Brangwain his ring, that she unseen
Might give in token privily to the queen
And send swift word where under moon or
sun

They twain might yet be no more twain but
one.

And that same night, under the stars that
rolled

Over their warm deep wildwood nights of old
Whose hours for grains of sand shed sparks
of fire,

Such way was made anew for their desire
By secret wile of sickness feigned, to keep
The king far off her vigils or her sleep,
That in the queen's pavilion midway set
By glimmering moon dawn were those lovers
met,

And Ganhardine of Brangwain gat him grace.
And in some passionate soft interspace
Between two swells of passion, when their
lips

Breathed, and made room for such brief speech
as slips

From tongues athirst with draughts of amor-
ous wine

That leaves them thirstier than the salt sea's
brine,

Was counsel taken how to fly, and where
Find covert from the wide world's ravaging
air

That hunts with storm the feet of nights and
days

Through strange thwart lines of life and
flowerless ways.

Then said Iseult. ' Lo, now the chance is
here

Foreshown me late by word of Guenevere,
To give me comfort of thy rumoured wrong,
My traitor Tristram, when report was strong
Of me forsaken and thine heart estranged :
Nor should her sweet soul toward me yet be
changed

Nor all her love lie barren, if mine hand
Crave harvest of it from the flowering land.
See therefore if this counsel please thee not,

That we take horse in haste for Camelot
And seek that friendship of her plighted troth
Which love shall be full fain to lend, nor loth
Shall my love be to take it.' So next night

The multitudinous stars laughed round their
flight,

Fulfilling far with laughter made of light
The encircling deeps of heaven : and in brief
space

At Camelot their long love gat them grace

Of those fair twain whose heads men's praise
impearled

As love's two lordliest lovers in the world.
And thence as guests for harbourage past they
forth

To win this noblest hold of all the north.
Far by wild ways and many days they rode,
Till clear across June's kingliest sunset
glowed

The great round girth of goodly wall that
showed

Where for one clear sweet season's length
should be

Their place of strength to rest in, fain and
free,

By the utmost margin of the loud lone sea.
And now, O Love, what comfort? God
most high,

Whose love is as a flower's to live and die,
Whose light is everlasting Lord, whose
breath

Speaks music through the deathless lips of
death

Whereto time's heart rings answer Bard,
whom time

Hears, and is vanquished with a wandering
rhyme

That once thy lips made fragrant: See,
whose sooth

Joy knows not well, but sorrow knows for
truth,

Being priestess of thy soothsayings. Love,
what grace

Shall these twain find at last before thy face?

This many a year they have served thee,
and deserved,

If ever man might yet of all that served,
Since the first heartbeat bade the first man's
knee

Bend, and his mouth take music, praising
thee,

Some comfort; and some honey indeed of
thine

Thou hast mixed for these with life's most
bitter wine

Commending to their passionate lips a draught
No deadlier than thy chosen of old have
quaffed

And blessed thine hand, their cupbearer's:
for not

On all men comes the grace that seals their
lot

As holier in thy sight, for all these feuds
That rend it, than the light-souled multi-
tude's,

Nor thwarted of thine hand nor blessed; but
these

Shall see no twilight, Love, nor fade at ease,
Grey-grown and careless of desired delight,
But lie down tired and sleep before the night.
These shall not live till time or change may
chill

Or doubt divide or shame subdue their will,
Or fear or slow repentance work them wrong,
Or love die first: these shall not live so long.
Death shall not take them drained of dear true
life

Already, sick or stagnant from the strife,
Quenched: not with dry-drawn veins and lin-
gering breath

Shall these through crumbling hours crouch
down to death.

Swift, with one strong clean leap, ere life's
pulse tire,

Most like the leap of lions or of fire,
Sheer death shall bound upon them: one pang
past,

The first keen sense of him shall be their last,
Their last shall be no sense of any fear,
More than their life had sense of anguish
here.

Weeks and light months had fled at swal-
low's speed

Since here their first hour sowed for them the
seed

Of many sweet as rest or hope could be;
Since on the blown beach of a glad new sea
Wherein strange rocks like fighting men stand
scarred

They saw the strength and help of Joyous
Gard.

Within the full deep glorious tower that stands,
Between the wild sea and the broad wild
lands,

Love led and gave them quiet: and they drew
Life like a God's life in each wind that blew,
And took their rest, and triumphed. Day by
day

The mighty moorlands and the sea-walls grey,
The brown bright waters of green fells that
sing

One song to rocks and flowers and birds on
wing,

Beheld the joy and glory that they had,
Passing, and how the whole world made them
glad,

And their great love was mixed with all things
great,

As life being lovely, and yet being strong like
fate.

For when the sun sprang on the sudden sea
 Their eyes sprang eastward, and the day to be
 Was lit in them untimely : such delight
 They took yet of the clear cold breath and
 light

That goes before the morning, and such grace
 Was deathless in them through their whole
 life's space

As dies in many with their dawn that dies
 And leaves in pulseless hearts and flameless
 eyes

No light to lighten and no tear to weep
 For youth's high joy that time has cast on
 sleep.

Yea, this old grace and height of joy they had,
 To lose no jot all that made them glad
 And filled their springs of spirit with such fire
 That all delight fed in them all desire ;
 And no whit less than in their first keen crime
 The spring's breath blew through all their
 summer time,
 And in their skies would sunlike Love con-
 fuse

Clear April colours with hot August hues,
 And in their hearts one light of sun and moon
 Reigned, and the morning died not of the
 noon :

Such might of life was in them, and so high
 Their heart of love rose higher than fate
 could fly.

And many a large delight of hawk and hound
 The great glad land that knows no bourne or
 bound,

Save the wind's own and the outer sea-bank's,
 gave

Their days for comfort ; many a long blithe
 wave

Buoyed their blithe bark between the bare
 bald rocks,

Deep, steep, and still, save for the swift free
 flocks

Unshepherded, uncompassed, unconfined,
 That when blown foam keeps all the loud air
 blind

Mix with the wind's their triumph, and par-
 take

The joy of blasts that ravin, waves that break,
 All round and all below their mustering
 wings,

A clanging cloud that round the cliff's edge
 clings

On each bleak bluff breaking the strenuous
 tides

That rings reverberate mirth when storm be-
 strides

The subject night in thunder : many a noon
 They took the moorland's or the bright sea's
 boon

With all their hearts into their spirit of sense,
 Rejoicing, where the sudden dells grew dense
 With sharp thick flight of hillside birds, or
 where

On some strait rock's ledge in the intense
 mute air

Erect against the cliff's sheer sunlit white.
 Blue as the clear north heaven, clothed warm
 with light,

Stood neck to bended neck and wing to wing
 With heads fast hidden under, close as cling
 Flowers on one flowering almond-branch in
 spring,

Three herons deep asleep against the sun,
 Each with one bright foot downward poised,
 and one

Wing-hidden hard by the bright head, and all
 Still as fair shapes fixed on some wondrous
 wall

Of minster-aisle or cloister-close or hall
 To take even time's eye prisoner with delight.
 Or, satisfied with joy of sound and sight,
 They sat and communed of things past : what
 state

King Arthur, yet unwarred upon by fate,
 Held high in hall at Camelot, like one
 Whose lordly life was as the mounting sun
 That climbs and pauses on the point of noon,
 Sovereign : how royal rang the tourney's tune
 Through Tristram's three days' triumph, spear
 to spear ;

When Iseult shone enthroned by Guenevere,
 Rose against rose, the highest adored on earth,
 Imperial : yet with subtle notes of mirth
 Would she bemock her praises, and bemoan
 Her glory by that splendour overthrown
 Which lightened from her sister's eyes elate ;
 Saying how by night a little light seems
 great,

But less than least of all things, very nought,
 When dawn undoes the web that darkness
 wrought ;

How like a tower of ivory well designed
 By subtlest hand subserving subtlest mind,
 Ivory with flower of rose incarnadined
 And kindling with some God therein revealed,
 A light for grief to look on and be healed,
 Stood Guenevere : and all beholding her
 Were heartstruck even as earth at midsum-
 mer

With burning wonder, hardly to be borne.
 So was that amorous glorious lady born,

A fiery memory for all storied years :
 Nor might men call her sisters crowned her
 peers,
 Her sister queens, put all by her to scorn .
 She had such eyes as are not made to mourn ;
 But in her own a gleaming ghost of tears
 Shone, and their glance was slower than
 Guenevere's,
 And fittful with fancies grown of grief ;
 Shamed as a Mayflower shames an autumn
 leaf
 Full well she wist it could not choose but be
 If in that other's eyeshot standing she
 Should lift her looks up ever . wherewithal
 Like fires whose light fills heaven with festi-
 val
 Flamed her eyes full on Tristram's ; and he
 laughed,
 Answering, ' What wile of sweet child-hearted
 craft
 That children forge for children, to beguile
 Eyes known of them not witless of the wile
 But fain to seem for sport's sake self-deceived,
 Wilt thou find out now not to be believed ?
 Or how shall I trust more than ouphe or elf
 Thy truth to me-ward, who beliest thyself ?'
 ' Nor elf nor ouphe or aught of airier kind,'
 Quoth she, ' though made of moonbeams
 moist and blind,
 Is light if weighed with man's winged weight-
 less mind.
 Though thou keep somewise troth with me,
 God wot,
 When thou didst wed, I doubt, thou thought-
 est not
 So charily to keep it.' ' Nay,' said he,
 ' Yet am not I rebukable by thee
 As Launcelot, erring, held me ere he wist
 No mouth save thine of mine was ever kissed
 Save as a sister's only, since we twain
 Drank first the draught assigned our lips to
 drain
 That Fate and Love with darkling hands
 commixt
 Poured, and no power to part them came
 betwixt,
 But either's will, howbeit they seem at strife,
 Was toward us one, as death itself and life
 Are one sole doom toward all men, nor may
 one
 Behold not darkness, who beholds the sun.'
 ' Ah, then,' she said, ' what word is this
 men hear
 Of Merlin, how some doom too strange to
 fear

Was cast but late about him oversea,
 Sweet recreant, in thy bridal Brittany ?
 Is not his life sealed fast on him with sleep,
 By witchcraft of his own and love's, to keep
 Till earth be fire and ashes ?'
 ' Surely,' said
 Her lover, ' not as one alive or dead
 The great good wizard, well beloved and well
 Predestinate of heaven that casts out hell
 For guerdon gentler far than all men's fate,
 Exempt alone of all predestinate,
 Takes his strange rest at heart of slumberland,
 More deep asleep in green Broceliande
 Than shipwrecked sleepers in the soft green
 sea
 Beneath the weight of wandering waves : but
 he
 Hath for those roofing waters overhead
 Above him always all the summer spread
 Or all the winter wailing : or the sweet
 Late leaves marked red with autumn's burn-
 ing feet,
 Or withered with his weeping, round the seer
 Rain, and he sees not, nor may heed or hear
 The witness of the winter : but in spring
 He hears above him all the winds on wing
 Through the blue dawn between the brighten-
 ing boughs,
 And on shut eyes and slumber-smitten brows
 Feels ambient change in the air and strength-
 ening sun,
 And knows the soul that was his soul at one
 With the ardent world's, and in the spirit of
 earth
 His spirit of life reborn to mightier birth
 And mixed with things of elder life than ours ;
 With cries of birds, and kindling lamps of
 flowers,
 And sweep and song of winds, and fruitful
 light
 Of sunbeams, and the far faint breath of night,
 And waves and woods at morning : and in all,
 Soft as at noon the slow sea's rise and fall,
 He hears in spirit a song that none but he
 Hears from the mystic mouth of Nimue
 Shed like a consecration ; and his heart,
 Hearing, is made for love's sake as a part
 Of that far singing, and the life thereof
 Part of that life that feeds the world with
 love :
 Yea, heart in heart is molten, hers and his,
 Into the world's heart and the soul that is
 Beyond or sense or vision ; and their breath
 Stirs the soft springs of deathless life and
 death,

Death that bears life, and change that brings
forth seed

Of life to death and death to life indeed,
As blood recircling through the unsounded
veins

Of earth and heaven with all their joys and
pains.

Ah, that when love shall laugh no more nor
weep

We too, we too might hear that song and
sleep !'

'Yea,' said Iseult, 'some joy it were to be
Lost in the sun's light and the all-girdling sea,
Mixed with the winds and woodlands, and to
bear

Part in the large life of the quickening air,
And the sweet earth's, our mother : yet to pass
More fleet than mirrored faces from the glass
Out of all pain and all delight, so far
That love should seem but as the furthest star
Sunk deep in trembling heaven, scarce seen
or known,

As a dead moon forgotten, once that shone
Where now the sun shines—nay, not all
things yet,

Not all things always, dying, would I forget.'
And Tristram answered amorously, and
said :

'O heart that here art mine, O heavenliest
head

That ever took men's worship here, which art
Mine, how shall death put out the fire at
heart,

Quench in men's eyes the head's remembered
light

That time shall set but higher in more men's
sight ?

Think thou not much to die one earthly day,
Being made not in their mould who pass away
Nor who shall pass for ever.'

'Ah,' she said,
'What shall it profit me, being praised and
dead ?

What profit have the flowers of all men's
praise ?

What pleasure of our pleasure have the days
That pour on us delight of life and mirth ?

What fruit of all our joy on earth has earth ?
Nor am I—nay, my lover, am I one

To take such part in heaven's enkindling sun
And in the inviolate air and sacred sea

As clothes with grace that wondrous Nimue ?
For all her works are bounties, all her deeds
Blessings ; her days are scrolls wherein love
reads

The record of his mercies : heaven above
Hath not more heavenly holiness of love
Than earth beneath, wherever pass or pause
Her feet that move not save by love's own
laws,

In gentleness of godlike wayfaring
To heal men's hearts as earth is healed by
spring

Of all such woes as winter : what am I,
Love, that have strength but to desire and
die,

That have but grace to love and do thee
wrong,

What am I that my name should live so long,
Save as the star that crossed thy star-struck
lot,

With hers whose light was life to Launcelot ?
Life gave she him, and strength, and fame
to be

For ever : I, what gift can I give thee ?
Peril and sleepless watches, fearful breath

Of dread more bitter for my sake than death
When death came nigh to call me by my name,
Exile, rebuke, remorse, and—O, not shame.

Shame only, this I gave thee not, whom none
May give that worst thing ever—no, not one.
Of all that hate, all hateful hearts that see
Darkness for light and hate where love should
be,

None for my shame's sake may speak shame
of thee.'

And Tristram answering ere he kissed her,
smiled :

'O very woman, god at once and child,
What ails thee to desire of me once more

The assurance that thou hadst in heart before ?
For all this wild sweet waste of sweet vain
breath,

Thou knowest I know thou hast given me
life, not death.

The shadow of death, informed with shows
of strife,

Was ere I won thee all I had of life.
Light war, light love, light living, dreams in
sleep,

Joy slight and light, not glad enough to weep,
Filled up my foolish days with sound and
shine.

Vision and gleam from strange men's cast on
mine.

Reverberate light from eyes presaging thine
That shed but shadowy moonlight where thy
face

Now sheds forth sunshine in the deep same
place,

The deep live heart half dead and shallower
then

Than summer fords which thwart not wan-
dering men.

For how should I, signed sorrow's from my
birth,

Kiss dumb the loud red laughing lips of
mirth?

Or how, sealed thine to be, love less than
heaven on earth?

My heart in me was held at restless rest,
Presageful of some prize beyond its quest,
Prophetic still with promise, fain to find the
best.

For one was fond and one was blithe and one
Fairer than all save twain whose peers are
none ;

For third on earth is none that heaven hath
seen

To stand with Guenevere beside my queen.
Not Nimue, girt with blessing as a guard :

Not the soft lures and laughter of Ettarde :
Not she, that splendour girdled round with
gloom,

Crowned as with iron darkness of the tomb,
And clothed with clouding conscience of a
monstrous doom,

Whose blind incestuous love brought forth a
fire

To burn her ere it burn its darkling sire,
Her mother's son, King Arthur : yet but
late

We saw pass by that fair live shadow of
fate,

The queen Morgause of Orkney, like a
dream

That scares the night when moon and starry
beam

Sicken and swoon before some sorcerer's eyes
Whose wordless charms defile the saintly
skies,

Bright still with fire and pulse of blood and
breath,

Whom her own sons have doomed for shame
to death.'

' Death—yea,' quoth she, ' there is not said
or heard

So oft aloud on earth so sure a word.
Death, and again death, and for each that
saith

Ten tongues chime answer to the sound of
death.

Good end God send us ever—so men pray.
But I—this end God send me, would I say,

To die not of division and a heart
Rent or with sword of severance cloven apart,

But only when thou diest and only where
thou art,

O thou my soul and spirit and breath to me,
O light, life, love ! yea, let this only be,

That dying I may praise God who gave me
thee,

Let hap what will thereafter.' So that day

They communed, even till even was worn
away,

Nor aught they said seemed strange or sad
to say,

But sweet as night's dim dawn to weariness.
Nor loved they life or love for death's sake
less,

Nor feared they death for love's or life's sake
more.

And on the sounding soft funeral shore
They, watching till the day should wholly die,

Saw the far sea sweep to the far grey sky,
Saw the long sands sweep to the long grey
sea.

And night made one sweet mist of moor and
lea,

And only far off shore the foam gave light.
And life in them sank silent as the night.

VII.

THE WIFE'S VIGIL.

BUT all that year in Brittany forlorn,
More sick at heart with wrath than fear of
scorn

And less in love with love than grief, and
less
With grief than pride of spirit and bitterness,

Till all the sweet life of her blood was
changed

And all her soul from all her past estranged
And all her will with all itself at strife

And all her mind at war with all her life,
Dwelt the white-handed Iseult, maid and wife,
A mourner that for mourning robes had on
Anger and doubt and hate of things foregone.
For that sweet spirit of old which made her
sweet

Was parched with blasts of thought as flowers
with heat

And withered as with wind of evil will ;
Though slower than frosts or fires consume
or kill

That bleak black wind vexed all her spirit
still.

As ripples reddening in the roughening
breath

Of the eager east when dawn does night to
death,

So rose and stirred and kindled in her thought
Fierce barren fluctuant fires that lit not aught,
But scorched her soul with yearning keen as
hate

And dreams that left her wrath disconsolate.
When change came first on that first heaven
where all

Life's hours were flowers that dawn's light
hand let fall,

The sun that smote her dewy cloud of days
Wrought from its showery folds his rainbow's
rays,

For love the red, for hope the gentle green,
But yellow jealousy glared pale between.

Ere yet the sky grew heavier, and her head
Bent flowerwise, chill with change and fancies
fled,

She saw but love arch all her heaven across
with red,

A burning bloom that seemed to breathe and
beat

And waver only as flame with rapturous heat
Wavers ; and all the world therewith smelt
sweet,

As incense kindling from the rose-red flame :
And when that full flush waned, and love
became

Scarce fainter, though his fading horscope
From certitude of sight receded, hope
Held yet her April-coloured light aloft
As though to lure back love, a lamp sublime
and soft.

But soon that light paled as a leaf grows pale
And fluttered leaf-like in the gathering gale

And melted even as dew-flakes, whose brief
sheen

The sun that gave despoils of glittering
green ;

Till harder shone 'twixt hope and love grown
cold

A sallow light like withering autumn's gold,
The pale strong flame of jealous thought,
that glows

More deep than hope's green bloom or love's
enkindled rose :

As though the sunflower's faint fierce disk
absorbed

The spirit and heart of starrier flowers dis-
orbed.

That same full hour of twilight's doors un-
baried

To let bright night behold in Joyous Gard
The glad grave eyes of lovers far away

Watch with sweet thoughts of death the death
of day

Saw lonelier by the narrower opening sea
Sit fixed at watch Iseult of Brittany.

As darkness from deep valleys void and bleak
Climbs till it clothe with night the sunniest
peak

Where only of all a mystic mountain-land
Day seems to cling yet with a trembling hand
And yielding heart reluctant to recede,
So, till her soul was clothed with night in-
deed,

Rose the slow cloud of envious will within
And hardening hate that held itself no sin,
Veiled heads of vision, eyes of evil gleam,
Dim thought on thought, and darkling dream
on dream.

Far off she saw in spirit, and seeing abhorred,
The likeness wrought on darkness of her
lord

Shine, and the imperial semblance at his
side

Whose shadow from her seat cast down the
bride,

Whose power and ghostly presence thrust her
forth :

Beside that unknown other sea far north
She saw them, clearer than in present sight
Rose on her eyes the starry shadow of night ;
And on her heart that heaved with gathering
fate

Rose red with storm the starless shadow of
hate ;

And eyes and heart made one saw surge and
swell

The fires of sunset like the fires of hell.

As though God's wrath would burn up sin
 with shame,
 The incensed red gold of deepening heaven
 grew flame :
 The sweet green spaces of the soft low sky
 Faded, as fields that withering wind leaves
 dry :
 The sea's was like a doomsman's blasting
 breath
 From lips afoam with ravenous lust of death.
 A night like desolation, sombre-starred,
 Above the great walled girth of Joyous Gard
 Spread forth its wide sad strength of shadow
 and gloom
 Wherein those twain were compassed round
 with doom :
 Hell from beneath called on them, and she
 heard
 Reverberate judgment in the wild wind's word
 Cry, till the sole sound of their names that
 rang
 Clove all the sea-mist with a clarion's clang,
 And clouds to clouds and flames to clustering
 flames
 Beat back the dark noise of the direful names.
 Fear and strong exultation caught her breath,
 And triumph like the bitterness of death,
 And rapture like the rage of hate allayed
 With ruin and ravin that its might hath
 made ;
 And her heart swelled and strained itself to
 hear
 What may be heard of no man's hungering
 ear,
 And as a soil that cleaves in twain for drouth
 Thirsted for judgment given of God's own
 mouth
 Against them, till the strength of dark desire
 Was in her as a flame of hell's own fire
 Nor seemed the wrath which held her spirit
 in stress
 Aught else or worse than passionate holiness,
 Nor the ardent hate which called on judg-
 ment's rod
 More hateful than the righteousness of God.
 'How long, till thou do justice, and my wrong
 Stand expiate ? O long-suffering judge, how
 long ?
 Shalt thou not put him in mine hand one day
 Whom I so loved, to spare not but to slay ?
 Shalt thou not cast her down for me to tread,
 Me, on the pale pride of her humbled head ?
 Do I not well, being angry ? doth not hell
 Require them ? yea, thou knowest that I do
 well.

Is not thy seal there set of bloodred light
 For witness on the brows of day and night ?
 Who shall unseal it ? what shall melt away
 Thy signet from the doors of night and day ?
 No man, nor strength of any spirit above,
 No prayer, nor ardours of adulterous love.
 Thou art God, the strong lord over body and
 soul :
 Hast thou not in the terrors of thy scroll
 All names of all men written as with fire ?
 Thine only breath bids time and space re-
 spire :
 And are not all things evil in them done
 More clear in thine eyes than in ours the sun ?
 Hast thou not sight stretched wide enough to
 see
 These that offend it, these at once and me ?
 Is thine arm shortened or thine hand struck
 down
 As palsied ? have thy brows not strength to
 frown ?
 Are thine eyes blind with film of withering
 age ?
 Burns not thine heart with righteousness of
 rage
 Yet, and the royal rancour toward thy foes
 Retributive of ruin ? Time should close,
 Thou said'st, and earth fade as a leaf grows
 grey,
 Ere one word said of thine should pass away.
 Was this then not thy word, thou God most
 high,
 That sin shall surely bring forth death and
 dic,
 Seeing how these twain live and have joy of
 life,
 His harlot and the man that made me wife
 For is it I, perchance, I that have sinned ?
 Me, peradventure, should thy wasting wind
 Smite, and thy sun blast, and thy storms de-
 vour
 Me with keen fangs of lightning ? should thy
 power
 Put forth on me the weight of its awakening
 hour ?
 Shall I that bear this burden bear that weight
 Of judgment ? is my sin against thee great,
 If all my heart against them burn with all its
 hate ?
 Thine, and not mine, should hate be ? nay,
 but me
 They have spoiled and scoffed at, who can
 touch not thee.
 Me, me, the fullness of their joy drains dry,
 Their fruitfulness makes barren ; thou, not I,

Lord, is it, whom their wrongdoing clothes
 with shame,
 That all who speak shoot tongues out at thy
 name
 As all who hear mock mine? Make me thy
 sword
 At least, if even thou too be wronged, O Lord,
 At all of these that wrong me: make mine
 hand
 As lightning, or my tongue a fiery brand,
 To burn or smite them with thy wrath: be-
 hold,
 I have nought on earth save thee for hope or
 hold.
 Fail me not thou: I have nought but this to
 crave,
 Make me thy mean to give them to the
 grave,
 Thy sign that all men seeing may speak thee
 just,
 Thy word which turns the strengths of sin to
 dust,
 Thy blast which burns up towers and thrones
 with fire.
 Lord, is this gift, this grace that I require,
 So great a gift, Lord, for thy grace to give
 And bid me bear thy part retributive?
 That I whom scorn makes mouths at, I
 might be
 Thy witness if loud sin may mock at thee?
 For lo, my life is as a barren ear
 Plucked from the sheaf: dark days drive past
 me here
 Downtrodden, while joy's reapers pile their
 sheaves,
 A thing more vile than autumn's weariest
 leaves,
 For these the sun filled once with sap of
 life.
 O thou my lord that hadst me to thy wife,
 Dost thou not fear at all, remembering me,
 The love that bowed my whole soul down to
 thee?
 Is this so wholly nought for man to dread,
 Man, whose life walks between the quick and
 dead,
 Naked, and warred about with wind and
 sea,
 That one should love and hate as I do
 thee?
 That one should live in all the world his foe
 So mortal as the hate that loves him so?
 Nought, is it nought, O husband, O my
 knight,
 O strong man, and indomitable in fight,

That one more weak than foam-bells on the
 sea
 Should have in heart such thoughts as I of
 thee?
 Thou art bound about with stately strengths
 for bands:
 What strength shall keep thee from my
 strengthless hands?
 Thou art girt about with goodly guards and
 great:
 What fosse may fence thee round as deep as
 hate?
 Thou art wise: will wisdom teach thee fear
 of me?
 Thou art great of heart: shall this deliver
 thee?
 What wall so massive, or what tower so
 high,
 Shall be thy surety that thou shouldst not
 die,
 If that which comes against thee be but I?
 Who shall rise up of power to take thy part,
 What skill find strength to save, what strength
 find art,
 If that which wars against thee be my
 heart?
 Not iron, nor the might of force afield,
 Nor edge of sword, nor sheltering weight of
 shield,
 Nor all thy fame since all thy praise began,
 Nor all the love and laud thou hast of man,
 Nor, though his noiseless hours with wool be
 shod,
 Shall God's love keep thee from the wrath of
 God.
 O son of sorrows, hast thou said at heart,
 Haply, God loves thee, God shall take thy
 part,
 Who hath all these years endured thee, since
 thy birth
 From sorrow's womb bade sin be born on
 earth?
 So long he hath cast his buckler over thee,
 Shall he not surely guard thee even from me?
 Yea, but if yet he give thee while I live
 Into mine hands as he shall surely give,
 Ere death at last bring darkness on thy
 face,
 Call then on him, call not on me for grace,
 Cast not away one prayer, one suppliant
 breath,
 On me that commune all this while with
 death.
 For I that was not and that was thy wife
 Desire not but one hour of all thy life

Wherein to triumph till that hour be past ;
But this mine hour I look for is thy last.

So mused she till the fire in sea and sky
Sank, and the northwest wind spake harsh on
high,

And like the sea's heart waxed her heart that
heard,

Strong, dark, and bitter, till the keen wind's
Seemed of her own soul spoken, and the breath
All round her not of darkness, but of death

VIII.

THE LAST PILGRIMAGE.

ENOUGH of ease, O Love, enough of light,
Enough of rest before the shadow of night.
Strong Love, whom death finds feebler ;
kingly Love,

Whom time discrowns in season, seeing thy
dove

Spell-stricken by the serpent ; for thy sake
These that saw light see night's dawn only
break,

Night's cup filled up with slumber, whence
men think

The draught more dread than thine was dire
O Love, thy day sets, darkling : hope and fear
Fall from thee standing stern as death stands
here.

For what have these to do with fear or hope
On whom the gates of outer darkness ope,
On whom the door of life's desire is barred ?
Past like a cloud their days in Joyous Gard
Gleam like a cloud the westering sun stains
red

Till all the blood of day's blithe heart be bled
And all night's heart requickenened ; in their
eyes

So flame and fade those far memorial skies,
So shines the moorland, so revives the sea,
Whereon they gazing mused of things to be
And wist not more of them than waters know
What wind with next day's change of tide
shall blow.

Dark roll the deepening days whose waves
divide

Unseasonably, with storm-struck change of
tide.

Tristram from Iseult : nor may sorrow say
If better wind shall blow than yesterday
With next day risen or any day to come.
For ere the songs of summer's death fell
dumb,

And autumn bade the imperial moorlands
change

Their purples, and the bracken's bloom grow
strange

As hope's green blossom touched with time's
harsh rust,

Was all their joy of life shaken to dust,
And all its fires made ashes : by the strand
Where late they strayed and communed hand
from hand

For the last time fell separate, eyes of eyes
Took for the last time leave, and saw the skies
Dark with their deep division. The last
time—

The last that ever love's rekindling rhyme
Should keep for them life's days and nights in
tune

With refluence of the morning and the moon
Alternative in music, and make one
The secrets of the stardawn and the sun
For these twain souls ere darkness held them
fast ;

The last before the labour marked for last
And toil of utmost knighthood, till the wage
Of rest might crown his crowning pilgrimage
Whereon forth faring must he take farewell,
With spear for staff and sword for scallop-
shell

And scrip wherein close memory hoarded yet
Things holier held than death might well for-
get ;

The last time ere the travel were begun
Whose goal is un beholden of the sun,
The last wherewith love's eyes might yet be lit,
Came, and they could but dream they knew
not it.

For Tristram parting from her wist at heart
How well she wist they might not choose but
part,

And he pass forth a pilgrim, when there came
A sound of summons in the high king's name
For succour toward his vassal Triamour,
King in wild Wales, now spoiled of all his
power,

As Tristram's father ere his fair son's birth,
By one the strongest of the sons of earth,
Urgan, an iron bulk of giant mould :
And Iseult in Tintagel as of old
Sat crowned with state and sorrow : for her
lord

At Arthur's hand required her back restored,
And willingly compelled against her will
She yielded, saying within her own soul still
Some season yet of soft or stormier breath
Should haply give her life again or death :
For now nor quick nor dead nor bright nor
dark

Were all her nights and days wherein King
Mark

Held haggard watch upon her, and his eyes
Were cloudier than the gradual wintering
skies

That closed about the wan wild land and sea.
And bitter toward him waxed her heart : but
he

Was rent in twain betwixt harsh love and hate
With pain and passion half compassionate
That yearned and laboured to be quit of
shame,

And could not : and his life grew smoulder-
ing flame,

And hers a cloud full-charged with storm and
shower,

Though touched with trembling gleams of
fire's bright flower

That flashed and faded on its fitful verge,
As hope would strive with darkness and
emerge

And sink, a swimmer strangled by the swal-
lowing surge.

But Tristram by dense hills and deepening
vales

Rode through the wild glad wastes of glorious
Wales,

High-hearted with desire of happy fight
And strong in soul with merrier sense of
might

Than since the fair first years that hailed him
knight :

For all his will was toward the war, so long
Had love repressed and wrought his glory
wrong,

So far the triumph and so fair the praise
Seemed now that kindled all his April days.

And here in bright blown autumn, while his
life

Was summer's yet for strength toward love or
strife,

Blithe waxed his hope toward battle, and high
desire

To pluck once more as out of circling fire
Fame, the broad flower whose breath makes
death more sweet

Than roses crushed by love's receding feet.
But all the lovely land wherein he went
The blast of ruin and ravenous war had rent ;
And black with fire the fields where home-
steads were,

And foul with festering dead the high soft air,
And foul with wail of women many a stream
Whose own live song was like love's deepen-
ing dream,

Spake all against the spoiler : wherefore still
Wrath waxed with pity, quickening all his
will,

In Tristram's heart for every league he rode
Through the aching land so broad a curse be-
strode

With so supreme a shadow : till one dawn,
Above the green bloom of a gleaming lawn,
High on the strait steep windy bridge that
spanned

A glen's deep mouth, he saw that shadow
stand

Visible, sword on thigh and mace in hand
Vast as the mid bulk of a roof-tree's beam.

So, sheer above the wild wolf-haunted stream,
Dire as the face disfeatured of a dream,
Rose Urgan : and his eyes were night and
flame ;

But like the fiery dawn were his that came
Against him, lit with more sublime desire
Than lifts toward heaven the leaping heart of
fire :

And strong in vantage of his perilous place
The huge high presence, red as earth's first
race,

Reared like a reed the might up of his mace,
And smote : but lightly Tristram swerved,
and drove

Right in on him, whose void stroke only clove
Air, and fell wide, thundering athwart : and he
Sent forth a stormier cry than wind or sea
When midnight takes the tempest for her
lord ;

And all the glen's throat seemed as hell's that
roared ;

But high like heaven's light over hell shone
Tristram's sword,

Falling, and bright as storm shows God's bare
 brand
 Flashed as it shore sheer off the huge right
 hand
 Whose strength was as the shadow of death
 on all that land.
 And like the trunk of some green tree sawn
 through
 Reeled Urgan, as his left hand grasped and
 drew
 A steel by sorcerers tempered : and anew
 Raged the red wind of fluctuant fight, till
 all
 The cliffs were thrilled as by the clangorous
 call
 Of storm's blown trumpets from the core of
 night,
 Charging : and even as with the storm-wind's
 might
 On Tristram's helm that sword crashed : and
 the knight
 Fell, and his arms clashed, and a wild cry
 broke
 From those far off that heard it, for his sake
 Soul-stricken : and that bulk of monstrous
 birth
 Sent forth again a cry more dire for mirth :
 But ere the sunbright arms were soiled of
 earth
 They flashed again, re-risen and swift and
 loud
 Rang the strokes out as from a circling cloud,
 So dense the dust wrought over them its
 drifted shroud.
 Strong strokes, within the mist their battle
 made,
 Each hailed on other through the shifting
 shade
 That clung about them hurtling as the swift
 fight swayed :
 And each between the jointed corslet saw
 Break forth his foe's bright blood at each grim
 flaw
 Steel made in hammered iron : till again
 The fiend put forth his might more strong for
 pain
 And cleft the great knight's glittering shield
 in twain,
 Laughing for very wrath and thirst to kill,
 A beast's broad laugh of blind and wolfish
 will,
 And smote again ere Tristram's lips drew
 breath
 Panting, and swept as by the sense of
 death,
 That surely should have touched and sealed
 them fast
 Save that the sheer stroke shrilled aside, and
 passed
 Frustrate : but answering Tristram smote
 anew,
 And thrust the brute breast as with lightning
 through
 Clean with one cleaving stroke of perfect
 might :
 And violently the vast bulk leapt upright,
 And plunged over the bridge, and fell : and
 all
 The cliffs reverberate from his monstrous fall
 Rang : and the land by Tristram's grace was
 free.
 So with high laud and honour thence went he,
 And southward set his sail again, and passed
 The lone land's ending, first beheld and last
 Of eyes that look on England from the sea :
 And his heart mourned within him, knowing
 how she
 Whose heart with his was fatefully made fast
 Sat now fast bound, as though some charm
 were cast
 About her, such a brief space eastward
 thence,
 And yet might soul not break the bonds of
 sense
 And bring her to him in very life and breath
 More than had this been even the sea of death
 That washed between them, and its wide
 sweet light
 The dim strait's darkness of the narrowing
 night
 That shuts about men dying whose souls put
 forth
 To pierce its passage through ; but south and
 north
 Alike for him were other than they were :
 For all the northward coast shone smooth and
 fair,
 And off its iron cliffs the keen-edged air
 Blew summer, kindling from her mute bright
 mouth ;
 But winter breathed out of the murmuring
 south,
 Where, pale with wrathful watch on passing
 ships,
 The lone wife lay in wait with wan dumb lips.
 Yet, sailing where the shoreward ripple
 curled
 Of the most wild sweet waves in all the world,
 His soul took comfort even for joy to see
 The strong deep joy of living sun and sea,

The large deep love of living sea and land,
As past the lonely lion-guarded strand
Where that huge warder lifts his couchant
sides,

Asleep, above the sleepless lapse of tides,
The light sail swept, and past the unsounded
caves

Unsearchable, wherein the pulse of waves
Throbs through perpetual darkness to and
fro,

And the blind night swims heavily below
While heavily the strong noon broods above,
Even to the very bay whence very Love,
Strong daughter of the giant gods who
wrought

Sun, earth, and sea out of their procreant
thought,

Most meetly might have risen, and most
divine

Beheld and heard things round her sound
and shine

From floors of foam and gold to walls of
serpentine.

For splendid as the limbs of that supreme
Incaruate beauty through men's visions gleam,
Whereof all fairest things are even but
shadow or dream,

And lovely like as Love's own heavenliest
face,

Gleams there and glows the presence and the
grace

Even of the mother of all, in perfect pride of
place.

For otherwhere beneath our world-wide sky
There may not be beheld of men that die

Aught else like this that dies not, nor may
stress

Of ages that bow down men's works make less
The exultant awe that clothes with power its
loveliness.

For who sets eye thereon soever knows
How since these rocks and waves first rolled
and rose

The marvel of their many-coloured might
Hath borne this record sensible to sight,

The witness and the symbol of their own
delight,

The gospel graven of life's most heavenly law.
Joy, brooding on its own still soul with awe,

A sense of godlike rest in godlike strife,
The sovereign conscience of the spirit of life.

Nor otherwhere on strand or mountain tower
Hath such fair beauty shining forth in flower

Put on the imperial robe of such imperious
power.

For all the radiant rocks from depth to height
Burn with vast bloom of glories blossom-
bright

As though the sun's own hand had thrilled
them through with light

And stained them through with splendour;
yet from thence

Such awe strikes rapture through the spirit of
sense

From all the inaccessible sea-wall's girth,
That exultation, bright at heart as mirth,

Bows deeper down before the beauty of earth
Than fear may bow down ever: nor shall one

Who meets at Alpine dawn the mounting sun
On heights too high for many a wing to climb

Be touched with sense of aught seen more
sublime

Than here smiles high and sweet in face of
heaven and time.

For here the flower of fire, the soft hoar bloom
Of springtide olive-woods, the warm green
gloom

Of clouded seas that swell and sound with
dawn of doom,

The keen thwart lightning and the wan grey
light

Of stormy sunrise crossed and vexed with
night,

Flash, loom, and laugh with divers hues in
one

From all the curved cliff's face, till day be done,
Against the sea's face and the gazing sun.

And whensoever a strong wave, high in hope,
Sweeps up some smooth slant breadth of
stone aslope,

That glowed with dusker fire of hues less
bright,

Swift as it sweeps back springs to sudden sight
The splendour of the moist rock's fervent
light,

Fresh as from dew of birth when time was
born

Out of the world-conceiving womb of morn.
All its quenched flames and darkling hues
divine

Leap into lustrous life and laugh and shine
And darken into swift and dim decline

For one brief breath's space till the next wave
run

Right up, and ripple down again, undone,
And leave it to be kissed and kindled of the
sun,

And all these things, bright as they shone
before

Man first set foot on earth or sail from shore,

Rose not less radiant than the sun sees now
When the autumn sea was cloven of Tris-
tram's prow,

And strong in sorrow and hope and woful will
That hope might move not nor might sorrow
kill

He held his way back toward the wild sad
shore

Whence he should come to look on these no
more,

Nor ever, save with sunless eyes shut fast,
Sail home to sleep in home-born earth at last.

And all these things fled fleet as light or
breath

Past, and his heart waxed cold and dull as
death,

Or swelled but as the tides of sorrow swell,
To sink with sullen sense of slow farewell.

So surely seemed the silence even to sigh
Assurance of inveterate prophecy,

'Thou shalt not come again home hither ere
thou die.'

And the wind mourned and triumphed, and
the sea

Wailed and took heart and trembled, nor
might he

Hear more of comfort in their speech, or see
More certitude in all the waste world's range

Than the only certitude of death and change.
And as the sense and semblance fluctuated

Of all things heard and seen alive or dead
That smote far off upon his ears or eyes

Or memory mixed with forecasts fain to rise
And fancies faint as ghostliest prophecies,

So seemed his own soul, changefully forlorn,
To shrink and triumph and mount up and
mourn.

Yet all its fitful waters, clothed with night,
Lost heart not wholly, lacked not wholly light,

Seeing over life and death one star in sight
Where evening's gates as fair as morning's ope,

Whose name was memory, but whose flame
was hope.

For all the tides of thought that rose and sank
Felt its fair strength wherefrom strong sorrow

shrank

A mightier trust than time could change or
cloy,

More strong than sorrow, more secure than
joy.

So came he, nor content nor all unblest,
Back to the grey old land of Merlin's rest.

But ere six paces forth on shore he trod
Before him stood a knight with feet unshod,

And kneeling called upon him, as on God

Might sick men call for pity, praying aloud
With hands held up and head made bare and
bowed;

'Tristram, for God's love and thine own dear
fame,

I Tristram that am one with thee in name
And one in heart with all that praise thee—I,

Most woful man of all that may not die
For heartbreak and the heavier scourge of

shame,
By all thy glory done our woful name

Beseech thee, called of all men gentlest
knight,:

Be now not slow to do my sorrows right.
I charge thee for thy fame's sake through this

land,
I pray thee by thine own wife's fair white

hand,
Have pity of me whose love is borne away

By one that makes of poor men's lives his
prey,

A felon masked with knighthood: at his side
Seven brethren hath he night or day to ride

With seven knights more that wait on all his
will:

And here at hand ere yet one day fulfil
Its flight through light and darkness, shall

they fare
Forth, and my bride among them, whom they

bear
Through these wild lands his prisoner; and if

now
I lose her, and my prayer be vain, and thou

Less fain to serve love's servants than of yore,
Then surely shall I see her face no more.

But if thou wilt, for love's sake of the bride
Who lay most loved of women at thy side,

Strike with me, straight then hence behoves
us ride

And rest between the moorside and the sea
Where we may smite them passing: but for

me
Poor stranger, me not worthy scarce to touch

Thy kind strong hand, how shouldst thou do
so much?

For now lone left this long time waits thy
wife

And lacks her lord and light of wedded life
Whilst thou far off art famous: yet thy fame,

If thou take pity on me that bear thy name
Unworthily, but by that name implore

Thy grace, how shall not even thy fame grow
more?

But be thy will as God's among us done,
Who art far in fame above us as the sun:

Yet only of him have all men help and grace.'

And all the lordly light of Tristram's face
Was softened as the sun's in kindly spring.
'Nay, then may God send me as evil a thing
When I give ear not to such prayers,' he said,
'And make my place among the nameless
dead

When I put back one hour the time to smite
And do the unrighteous griefs of good men
right.

Behold, I will not enter in nor rest
Here in mine own halls till this piteous quest
Find end ere noon to-morrow : but do thou,
Whose sister's face I may not look on now,
Go, Ganhardine, with tiding of the vow
That bids me turn aside for one day's strife
Or live dishonoured all my days of life,
And greet for me in brother's wise my wife,
And crave her pardon that for knighthood's
sake

And womanhood's, whose hands may no man
break

And keep the bands of bounden honour fast,
I seek not her till two nights yet be past
And this my quest accomplished, so God
please

By me to give this young man's anguish ease
And on his wrongdoer's head his wrong re-
quite.'

And Tristram with that woful thankful
knight

Rode by the seaside moorland wastes away
Between the quickening night and darkening
day

Ere half the gathering stars had heart to
shine.

And lightly toward his sister Ganhardine
Sped, where she sat and gazed alone afar
Above the grey sea for the sunset star,
And lightly kissed her hand and lightly spake
His tiding of that quest for knighthood's sake.
And the white-handed Iseult, bowing her
head,

Gleaned on him with a glance athwart, and
said :

'As God's on earth and far above the sun,
So toward his handmaid be my lord's will
done.'

And doubts too dim to question or divine
Touched as with shade the spirit of Ganhar-
dine,

Hearing; and scarce for half a doubtful
breath

His bright light heart held half a thought of
death

And knew not whence this darkling thought
might be,

But surely not his sister's work : for she
Was ever sweet and good as summer air,
And soft as dew when all the night is fair,
And gracious as the golden maiden moon
When darkness craves her blessing : so full
soon

His mind was light again as leaping waves,
Nor dreamed that hers was like a field of
graves

Where no man's foot dare swerve to left or
right,

Nor ear dares hearken, nor dares eye take
sight

Of aught that moves and murmurs there at
night.

But by the sea-banks where at morn their
foes

Might find them, lay those knightly name-
fellows,

One sick with grief of heart and sleepless, one
With heart of hope triumphant as the sun
Dreaming asleep of love and fame and fight :
But sleep at last wrapped warm the wan
young knight ;

And Tristram with the first pale windy light
Woke ere the sun spake summons, and his ear
Caught the sea's call that fired his heart to
hear,

A noise of waking waters : for till dawn
The sea was silent as a mountain lawn
When the wind speaks not, and the pines are
dumb,

And summer takes her fill ere autumn come
Of life more soft than slumber : but ere day
Rose, and the first beam smote the bounding
bay,

Up sprang the strength of the dark East, and
took

With its wide wings the waters as they shook,
And hurled them huddling on aheap, and cast
The full sea shoreward with a great glad blast,
Blown from the heart of morning : and with
joy

Full-souled and perfect passion, as a boy
That leaps up light to wrestle with the sea
For pure heart's gladness and large ecstasy,
Up sprang the might of Tristram ; and his
soul

Yearned for delight within him, and waxed
whole

As a young child's with rapture of the hour
That brought his spirit and all the world to
flower,

And all the bright blood in his veins beat time
To the wind's clarion and the water's chime
That called him and he followed it and stood
On the sand's verge before the grey great
 floor

Where the white hurtling heads of waves that
 met

Rose unsaluted of the sunrise yet.

And from his heart's root outward shot the
 sweet

Strong joy that thrilled him to the hands and
 feet,

Filling his limbs with pleasure and glad
 might,

And his soul drank the immeasurable delight
That earth drinks in with morning, and the
 free

Limitless love that lifts the stirring sea
When on her bare bright bosom as a bride
She takes the young sun, perfect in his pride,
Home to his place with passion : and the
 heart

Trembled for joy within the man whose part
Was here not least in living and his mind
Was rapt abroad beyond man's meaner kind
And pierced with love of all things and with
 mirth

Moved to make one with heaven and heaven-
 like earth

And with the light live water. So awhile
He watched the dim sea with a deepening
 smile,

And felt the sound and savour and swift flight
Of waves that fled beneath the fading night
And died before the darkness, like a song
With harps between and trumpets blown
 along

Through the loud air of some triumphant day,
Sink through his spirit and purge all sense
 away

Save of the glorious gladness of his hour
And all the world about to break in flower
Before the sovereign laughter of the sun ;
And he, ere night's wide work lay all undone,
As earth from her bright body casts off night,
Cast off his raiment for a rapturous fight
And stood between the sea's edge and the sea
Naked, and godlike of his mould as he
Whose swift foot's sound shook all the towers
 of Troy ;

So clothed with might, so girt upon with joy,
As, ere the knife had shorn to feed the fire
His glorious hair before the unkindled pyre
Whereon the half of his great heart was laid,
Stood, in the light of his live limbs arrayed,

Child of heroic earth and heavenly sea,
The flower of all men : scarce less bright
 than he,

If any of all men latter-born might stand,
Stood Tristram, silent, on the glimmering
 strand.

Not long : but with a cry of love that rang
As from a trumpet golden-mouthed, he sprang
As toward a mother's where his head might
 rest

Her child rejoicing, toward the strong sea's
 breast

That none may gird nor measure : and his
 heart

Sent forth a shout that bade his lips not part,
But triumphed in him silent : no man's voice,
No song, no sound of clarions that rejoice,
Can set that glory forth which fills with fire
The body and soul that have their whole
 desire

Silent, and freer than birds or dreams are free
Take all their will of all the encountering sea.
And toward the foam he bent and forward
 smote,

Laughing, and launched his body like a boat
Full to the sea-breach, and against the tide
Struck strongly forth with amorous arms made
 wide

To take the bright breast of the wave to his
And on his lips the sharp sweet minute's kiss
Given of the wave's lip for a breath's space
 curled

And pure as at the daydawn of the world.
And round him all the bright rough shudder-
 ing sea

Kindled, as though the world were even as
 he,

Heart-stung with exultation of desire ;
And all the life that moved him seemed to
 aspire,

As all the sea's life toward the sun : and still
Delight within him waxed with quickening
 will

More smooth and strong and perfect as a
 flame

That springs and spreads, till each glad limb
 became

A note of rapture in the tune of life,
Live music mild and keen as sleep and strife :
Till the sweet change that bids the sense grow
 sure

Of deeper depth and purity more pure
Wrapped him and lapped him round with
 clearer cold,

And all the rippling green grew royal gold

Between him and the far sun's rising rim,
And like the sun his heart rejoiced in him,
And brightened with a broadening flame of
mirth :

And hardly seemed its life a part of earth,
But the life kindled of a fiery birth
And passion of a new-begotten son
Between the live sea and the living sun.
And mightier grew the joy to meet full-faced
Each wave, and mount with upward plunge,
and taste

The rapture of its rolling strength, and cross
Its flickering crown of snows that flash and
toss

Like plumes in battle's blithest chage, and
thence

To match the next with yet more strenuous
sense ;

Till on his eyes the light beat hard and bade
His face turn west and shoreward through
the glad

Swift revel of the waters golden-clad,
And back with light reluctant heart he bore
Across the broad-backed rollers in to shore ;
Strong-spirited for the chance and cheer of
fight,

And donned his arms again, and felt the
might

In all his limbs rejoice for strength, and
praised

God for such life as that whereon he gazed,
And wist not surely its joy was even as fleet
As that which laughed and lapsed against his
feet,

The bright thin grey foam-blossom, glad and
hoar,

That flings its flower along the flowerless
shore

On sand or shingle, and still with sweet
strange snows,

As where one great white storm dishevelled
rose

May rain her wild leaves on a windy land,
Strews for long leagues the sounding slope of
strand,

And flower on flower falls flashing, and anew
A fresh light leaps up whence the last flash
flew,

And cast its brief glad gleam of life away
To fade not flowerwise but as drops the day
Storm-smitten, when at once the dark devours
Heaven and the sea and earth with all their
flowers ;

No star in heaven, on earth no rose to see,
But the white blown brief blossoms of the sea,

That make her green gloom starrier than the
sky,

Dance yet before the tempest's tune, and die.
And all these things he glanced upon, and
knew

How fair they shone, from earth's least flake
of dew

To stretch of seas and imminence of skies,
Unwittingly, with unpresageful eyes,
For the last time. The world's half heavenly
face,

The music of the silence of the place,
The confluence and the reflux of the sea,
The wind's note ringing over wold and lea,
Smote once more through him keen as fire
that smote,

Rang once more through him one reverberate
note,

That faded as he turned again and went,
Fulfilled by strenuous joy with strong content,
To take his last delight of labour done
That yet should be beholden of the sun
Or ever give man comfort of his hand.

Beside a wood's edge in the broken land
An hour at wait the twain together stood,
Till swift between the moorside and the
wood

Flashed the spears forward of the coming
train ;

And seeing beside the strong chief spoiler's
rein

His wan love riding prisoner in the crew,
Forth with a cry the young man leapt, and
flew

Right on that felon sudden as a flame ;
And hard at hand the mightier Tristram
came,

Bright as the sun and terrible as fire ;
And there had sword and spear their soul's
desire,

And blood that quenched the spear's thirst as
it poured

Slaked royally the hunger of the sword,
Till the fierce heart of steel could scarce
fulfil

Its greed and ravin of insatiate will.

For three the fiery spear of Tristram drove
Down ere a point of theirs his harness clove
Or its own sheer mid shaft splintered in twain ;

And his heart bounded in him, and was fain
As fire or wind that takes its fill by night

Of tempest and of triumph : so the knight
Rejoiced and ranged among them, great of
hand,

Till seven lay slain upon the heathery sand

Or in the dense breadth of the woodside fern.
 Nor did his heart not mightier in him burn
 Seeing at his hand that young knight fallen,
 and high
 The red sword reared again that bade him die.
 But on the slayer exulting like the flame
 Whose foot foreshines the thunder Tristram
 came
 Raging, for piteous wrath had made him fire ;
 And as a lion's look his face was dire
 That flashed against his foeman ere the sword
 Lightened, and wrought the heart's will of its
 lord,
 And clove through casque and crown the
 wrongdoer's head.
 And right and left about their dark chief dead
 Hurtled and hurled those felons to and fro,
 Till as a storm-wind scatters leaves and snow
 His right hand ravening scattered them ; but
 one
 That fled with sidelong glance athwart the sun
 Shot, and the shaft flew sure, and smote
 aright,
 Full in the wound's print of his great first fight
 When at his young strength's peril he made
 free
 Cornwall, and slew beside its bordering sea
 The fair land's foe, who yielding up his
 breath
 Yet left him wounded nigh to dark slow death.
 And hardly with long toil thence he won home
 Between the grey moor and the glimmering
 foam,
 And halting fared through his own gate, and
 fell,
 Thirsting : for as the sleepless fire of hell
 The fire within him of his wound again
 Burned, and his face was dark as death for
 pain,

And blind the blithe light of his eyes : but
 they
 Within that watched and wist not of the fray
 Came forth and cried aloud on him for woe.
 And scarce aloud his thanks fell faint and slow
 As men reared up the strong man fallen and
 bore
 Down the deep hall that looked along the
 shore.
 And laid him soft abed, and sought in vain
 If herb or hand of leech might heal his pain.
 And the white-handed Iseult hearkening heard
 All, and drew nigh, and spake no wifely word,
 But gazed upon him doubtfully, with eyes
 Clouded ; and he in kindly knightly wise
 Spake with scant breath, and smiling : ' Surely
 this
 Is penance for discourteous lips to kiss
 And feel the brand burn through them, here
 to lie
 And lack the strength here to do more than
 sigh
 And hope not hence for pardon.' Then she
 bowed
 Her head, still silent as a stooping cloud,
 And laid her lips against his face ; and he
 Felt sink a shadow across him as the sea
 Might feel a cloud stoop toward it : and his
 heart
 Darkened as one that wastes by sorcerous art
 And knows not whence it withers : and he
 turned
 Back from her emerald eyes his own, and
 yearned
 All night for eyes all golden : and the dark
 Hung sleepless round him till the loud first
 lark
 Rang record forth once more of darkness done,
 And all things born took comfort from the sun.

IX.

THE SAILING OF THE SWAN.

FATE, that was born ere spirit and flesh were
 made,
 The fire that fills man's life with light and
 shade ;
 The power beyond all godhead which puts on
 All forms of multitudinous unison,

A raiment of eternal change inwrought
 With shapes and hues more subtly spun than
 thought,
 Where all things old bear fruit of all things new
 And one deep chord throbs all the music
 through,

The chord of change unchanging, shadow and light

Inseparable as reverberate day from night ;
Fate, that of all things save the soul of man
Is lord and God since body and soul
began ;

Fate, that keeps all the tune of things in
chime ;

Fate, that breathes power upon the lips of
time ;

That smites and soothes with heavy and heal-
ing hand

All joys and sorrows born in life's dim land,
Till joy be found a shadow and sorrow a
breath

And life no discord in the tune with death,
But all things fain alike to die and live

In pulse and lapse of tides alternative,
Through silence and through sound of peace
and strife,

Till birth and death be one in sight of life ;
Fate, heard and seen of no man's eyes or ears,
To no man shown through light of smiles or
tears,

And moved of no man's prayer to fold its
wings ;

Fate, that is night and light on worldly things ;
Fate, that is fire to burn and sea to drown,
Strength to build up and thunder to cast
down ;

Fate, shield and screen for each man's life-
long head,

And sword at last or dart that strikes it dead ;
Fate, higher than heaven and deeper than the
grave,

That saves and spares not, spares and doth
not save :

Fate, that in gods' wise is not bought and
sold

For prayer or price of penitence or gold ;
Whose law shall live when life bids earth fare-
well,

Whose justice hath for shadows heaven and
hell ;

Whose judgment into no god's hand is given,
Nor is its doom not more than hell or heaven :

Fate, that is pure of love and clean of hate,
Being equal-eyed as nought may be but fate :

Through many and weary days of foiled desire
Leads life to rest where tears no more take
fire ;

Through many and weary dreams of quenched
delight

Leads life through death past sense of day
and night.

Nor shall they feel or fear, whose date is
done,

Aught that made once more dark the living
sun

And bitterer in their breathing lips the breath
Than the dark dawn and bitter dust of death.

For all the light, with fragrance as of flowers,
That clothes the lithe live limbs of separate
hours,

More sweet to savour and more clear to sight
Dawns on the soul death's undivided night.

No vigils has that perfect night to keep,
No fever-fits of vision shake that sleep.

Nor if they wake, and any place there be
Wherein the soul may feel her wings beat free

Through air too clear and still for sound or
strife ;

If life were haply death, and death be life :
If love with yet some lovelier laugh revive,
And song relume the light it bore alive,

And friendship, found of all earth's gifts most
good,

Stand perfect in perpetual brotherhood ;
If aught indeed at all of all this be,

Though none might say nor any man might
see,

Might he that sees the shade thereof not say
This dream were trustier than the truth of
day.

Nor haply may not hope, with heart more
clear,

Burn deathward, and the doubtful soul take
cheer,

Seeing through the channelled darkness yearn
a star

Whose eyebeams are not as the morning's are,
Transient, and subjugate of lordlier light,

But all unconquerable by noon or night,
Being kindled only of life's own inmost fire,

Truth, 'stablished and made sure by strong
desire,

Fountain of all things living, source and
seed,

Force that perforce transfigures dream to
deed,

God that begets on time, the body of death,
Eternity : nor may man's darkening breath,

Albeit it stain, disfigure or destroy
The glass wherein the soul sees life and joy

Only, with strength renewed and spirit of
youth,

And brighter than the sun's the body of Truth
Eternal, unimaginable of man,

Whose very face not Thought's own eyes may
scan,

But see far off his radiant feet at least,
 Trampling the head of Fear, the false high
 priest,
 Whose broken chalice foams with blood no
 more,
 And prostrate on that high priest's chancel
 floor,
 Bruised, overthrown, blind, maimed, with
 bloodless rod,
 The miscreation of his miscreant God.
 That sovereign shadow cast of souls that dwell
 In darkness and the prison-house of hell
 Whose walls are built of deadly dread, and
 bound
 The gates thereof with dreams as iron round,
 And all the bars therein and stanchions
 wrought
 Of shadow forged like steel and tempered
 thought
 And words like swords and thunder-clouded
 creeds
 And faiths more dire than sin's most direful
 deeds :
 That shade accursed and worshipped, which
 hath made
 The soul of man that brought it forth a shade
 Black as the womb of darkness, void and vain,
 A throne for fear, a pasturage for pain,
 Impotent, abject, clothed upon with lies,
 A foul blind fume of words and prayers that
 rise,
 Aghast and harsh, abhorrent and abhorred,
 Fierce as its God, blood-saturate as its Lord ;
 With loves and mercies on its lips that hiss
 Comfort, and kill compassion with a kiss
 And strike the world black with their blasting
 breath ;
 That ghost whose core of life is very death
 And all its light of heaven a shadow of hell,
 Fades, falls, wanes, withers by none other
 spell
 But theirs whose eyes and ears have seen and
 heard
 Not the face naked, not the perfect word
 But the bright sound and feature felt from far
 Of life which feeds the spirit and the star,
 Thrills the live light of all the suns that roll,
 And stirs the still sealed springs of every soul.
 Three dim days through, three slumberless
 nights long,
 Perplexed at dawn, oppressed at evensong,
 The strong man's soul now sealed indeed with
 pain,
 And all its springs half dried with drought,
 had lain

Prisoner within the fleshy dungeon-dress
 Sore chafed and wasted with its weariness.
 And fain it would have found the star, and
 fain
 Made this funereal prison-house of pain
 A watch-tower whence its eyes might sweep,
 and see
 If any place for any hope might be
 Beyond the hells and heavens of sleep and
 strife,
 Or any light at all of any life
 Beyond the dense false darkness woven above,
 And could not, lacking grace to look on love.
 And in the third night's dying hour he spake,
 Seeing scarce the seals that bound the day-
 spring break
 And scarce the daystar burn above the sea :
 ' O Ganhardine, my brother true to me,
 I charge thee by those nights and days we
 knew
 No great while since in England, by the dew
 That bathed those nights with blessing, and
 the fire
 That thrilled those days as music thrills a lyre,
 Do now for me perchance the last good deed
 That ever love may crave or life may need
 Ere love lay life in ashes : take to thee
 My ship that shows aloft against the sea
 Carved on her stem the semblance of a swan,
 And ere the waves at even again wax wan
 Pass, if it may be, to my lady's land,
 And give this ring into her secret hand,
 And bid her think how hard on death I lie.
 And fain would look upon her face and die.
 But as a merchant's laden be the bark
 With royal ware for freightage, that King
 Mark
 May take for toll thereof some costly thing ;
 And when this gift finds grace before the king,
 Choose forth a cup, and put therein my ring
 Where surest only of one it may be seen,
 And bid her handmaid bear it to the queen
 For earnest of thine homage : then shall she
 Fear, and take counsel privily with thee,
 To know what errand there is thine from me
 And what my need in secret of her sight.
 But make thee two sails, one like sea-foam
 white
 To spread for signal if thou bring her back,
 And if she come not see the sail be black,
 That I may know or ever thou take land
 If these my lips may die upon her hand
 Or hers may never more be mixed with mine.'
 And his heart quailed for grief in Ganhar-
 dine.

Hearing ; and all his brother bade he swore
Surely to do, and straight fare forth from
shore.

But the white-handed Iseult hearkening heard
All, and her heart waxed hot, and every word
Thereon seemed graven and printed in her
thought

As lines with fire and molten iron wrought.
And hard within her heavy heart she cursed
Both, and her life was turned to fiery thirst,
And all her soul was hunger, and its breath
Of hope and life a blast of raging death.
For only in hope of evil was her life.
So bitter burned within the unchilded wife
A virgin lust for vengeance, and such hate
Wrought in her now the fervent work of fate.

Then with a south-west wind the Swan set
forth,

And over wintering waters bore to north,
And round the wild land's windy westward
end

Up the blown channel bade her bright way
bend

East on toward high Tintagel : where at dark
Landing, fair welcome found they of King
Mark,

And Ganhardine with Brangwain as of old
Spake, and she took the cup of chiselled gold
Wherein lay secret Tristram's trothplight ring,
And bare it unbeholden of the king
Even to her lady's hand, which hardly took
A gift whereon a queen's eyes well might look,
With grace forlorn of weary gentleness
But, seeing, her life leapt in her, keen to
guess

The secret of the symbol : and her face
Flashed bright with blood whence all its grief-
worn grace

Took fire and kindled to the quivering hair.
And in the dark soft hour of starriest air
Thrilled through with sense of midnight, when
the world

Feels the wide wings of sleep about it furled,
Down stole the queen, deep-muffled to her
wan

Mute restless lips, and came where yet the
Swan

Swung fast at anchor : whence by starlight she
Hoised snowbright sails and took the glim-
mering sea.

But all the long night long more keen and sore
His wound's grief waxed in Tristram ever-
more,

And heavier always hung his heart asway
Between dim fear and clouded hope of day.

And still with face and heart at silent strife
Beside him watched the maiden called his
wife,

Patient, and spake not save when scarce he
spake,

Murmuring with sense distraught and spirit
awake

Speech bitterer than the words thereof were
sweet :

And hatred thrilled her to the hands and feet,
Lastening : for alway back reiterate came
The passionate faint burden of her name.
Nor ever through the labouring lips astrid
Came any word of any thought of her,
But the soul wandering struggled and clung
hard

Only to dreams of joy in Joyous Gard
Or wildwood nights beside the Cornish strand,
Or Merlin's holier sleep here hard at hand
Wrapped round with deep soft spells in dim
Broceliande.

And with such thirst as joy's drained wine-cup
leaves

When fear to hope as hope to memory cleaves
His soul desired the dewy sense of leaves,
The soft green smell of thickets drenched with
dawn,

The faint slot kindling on the fiery lawn
As day's first hour made keen the spirit again
That lured and spurred on quest his hound
Hodain,

The breeze, the bloom, the splendour and the
sound,

That stung like fire the hunter and the hound,
The pulse of wind, the passion of the sea,
The rapture of the woodland : then would he
Sigh, and as one that fain would all be dead
Heavily turn his heavy-laden head

Back, and close eyes for comfort, finding none.
And fain he would have died or seen the sun,
Being sick at heart of darkness : yet afresh
Began the long strong strife of spirit and flesh
And branching pangs of thought whose
branches bear

The bloodred fruit whose core is black, de-
spair.

And the wind slackened and again grew great,
Palpitant as men's pulses palpitate
Between the flowing and ebbing tides of fate
That wash their lifelong waifs of weal and woe
Through night and light and twilight to and
fro.

Now as a pulse of hope its heartbeat throbbed,
Now like one stricken shrank and sank and
sobbed,

Then, yearning as with child of death, put forth

A wail that filled the night up south and north
With woful sound of waters : and he said,
'So might the wind wail if the world were dead

And its wings wandered over nought but sea.
I would I knew she would not come to me,
For surely she will come not : then should I,
Once knowing I shall not look upon her, die.
I knew not life could so long breathe such breath

As I do. Nay, what grief were this, if death,
The sole sure friend of whom the whole world saith

He lies not, nor hath ever this been said,
That death would heal not grief—if death were dead

And all ways closed whence grief might pass with life !'

Then softly spake his watching virgin wife
Out of her heart, deep down below her breath :
'Fear not but death shall come—and after death

Judgment.' And he that heard not answered her,

Saying—' Ah, but one there was, if truth not err,
For true men's trustful tongues have said it—one

Whom these mine eyes knew living while the sun

Looked yet upon him, and mine own ears heard

The deep sweet sound once of his godlike word—

Who sleeps and dies not, but with soft live breath

Takes always all the deep delight of death,
Through love's gift of a woman : but for me
Love's hand is not the hand of Nimue,
Love's word no still smooth murmur of the dove,

No kiss of peace for me the kiss of love.
Nor, whatsoe'er thy life's love ever give,

Dear, shall it ever bid me sleep or live ;
Nor from thy brows and lips and living breast

As his from Nimue's shall my soul take rest ;
Not rest but unrest hath our long love given—

Unrest on earth that wins not rest in heaven.
What rest may we take ever? what have we

Had ever more of peace than has the sea?
Has not our life been as a wind that blows

Through lonelier lands than rear the wild white rose

That each year sees requickened, but for us
Time once and twice hath here or there done thus

And left the next year following empty and bare?

What rose hath our last year's rose left for heir,
What wine our last year's vintage? and to me.
More were one fleet forbidden sense of thee,
One perfume of thy present grace, one thought
Made truth one hour, ere all mine hours be nought,

One very word, breath, look, sign, touch of hand,

Than all the green leaves in Broceliande
Full of sweet sound, full of sweet wind and sun ;

O God, thou knowest I would no more but one,

I would no more but once more ere I die
Find thus much mercy. Nay, but then were I
Happier than he whom there thy grace hath found,

For thine it must be, this that wraps him round,

Thine, only, albeit a fiend's force gave him birth,

Thine that has given him heritage on earth
Of slumber-sweet eternity to keep
Fast in soft hold of everliving sleep.

Happier were I, more sinful man than he,
Whom one love-worthier than than Nimue
Should with a breath make blest among the dead.'

And the wan wedded maiden answering said,

Soft as hate speaks within itself apart :
'Surely ye shall not, ye that rent mine heart,
Being one in sin, in punishment be twain.'

And the great knight that heard not spake again

And sighed, but sweet thought of sweet things gone by

Kindled with fire of joy the very sigh
And touched it through with rapture ' Ay, this were

How much more than the sun and sunbright air,
How much more than the springtide, how much more

Than sweet strong sea-wind quickening wave and shore

With one divine pulse of continuous breath,
If she might kiss me with the kiss of death,
And make the light of life by death's look dim !'

And the white wedded virgin answered him,

Inwardly, wan with hurt no herb makes whole :

'Yea, surely, ye whose sin hath slain my soul,
Surely your own souls shall have peace in death

And pass with benediction in their breath
And blessing given of mine their sin hath slain.'

And Tristram with sore yearning spake again,

Saying : 'Yea, might this thing once be, how should I,

With all my soul made one thanksgiving, die,
And pass before what judgment-seat may be,
And cry, "Lord, now do all thou wilt with me,

Take all thy fill of justice, work thy will ;
Though all thy heart of wrath have all its fill,
My heart of suffering shall endure, and say,
For that thou gavest me living yesterday
I bless thee though thou curse me." Ay, and well

Might one cast down into the gulf of hell,
Remembering this, take heart and thank his fate—

That God, whose doom now scourges him with hate,

Once, in the wild and whirling world above,
Bade mercy kiss his dying lips with love.

But if this come not, then he doth me wrong.
For what hath love done, all this long life long,

That death should trample down his poor last prayer

Who prays not for forgiveness? Though love were

Sin dark as hate, have we not here that sinned

Suffered? has that been less than wintry wind

Wherewith our love lies blasted? O my own,

O mine and no man's yet save mine alone,
Iseult ! what ails thee that I lack so long

All of thee, all things thine for which I long?
For more than watersprings to shadeless sands,

More to me were the comfort of her hands
Touched once, and more than rays that set and rise

The glittering arrows of her glorious eyes,
More to my sense than fire to dead cold air
The wind and light and odour of her hair,
More to my soul than summer's to the south
The mute clear music of her amorous mouth,

And to my heart's heart more than heaven's great rest

The fullness of the fragrance of her breast,
Iseult, Iseult, what grace hath life to give
More than we twain have had of life, and live ?

Iseult, Iseult, what grace may death not keep
As sweet for us to win of death, and sleep?

Come therefore, let us twain pass hence and try

If it be better not to live but die,
With love for lamp to light us out of life.'

And on that word his wedded maiden wife,
Pale as the moon in star-forsaken skies
Ere the sun fill them, rose with set strange eyes

And gazed on him that saw not : and her heart

Heaved as a man's death-smitten with a dart
That smites him sleeping, warm and full of life :

So toward her lord that was not looked his wife,

His wife that was not : and her heart within
Burnt bitter like an aftertaste of sin

To one whose memory drinks and loathes the lee

Of shame or sorrow deeper than the sea ;
And no fear touched him of her eyes above

And ears that hoarded each poor word whence love

Made sweet the broken music of his breath.

'Iseult, my life that wast and art my death,
My life in life that hast been, and that art

Death in my death, sole wound that cleaves mine heart,

Mine heart that else, how spent soe'er, were whole,

Breath of my spirit and anguish of my soul,
How can this be that hence thou canst not hear,

Being but by space divided? One is here,
But one of twain I looked at once to see ;

Shall death keep time and thou not keep with me ?'

And the white married maiden laughed at heart,

Hearing, and scarce with lips at all apart
Spake, and as fire between them was her breath ;

'Yea, now thou liest not : yea, for I am death.'

By this might eyes that watched without behold

Deep in the gulfs of aching air acold

The roses of the dawning heaven that strew
The low soft sun's way ere his power shine
through

And burn them up with fire : but far to west
Had sunk the dead moon on the live sea's
breast,

Slain as with bitter fear to see the sun
And eastward was a strong bright wind begun
Between the clouds and waters : and he said,
Seeing hardly through dark dawn her doubtful head,

'Iseult?' and like a death-bell faint and clear
The virgin voice rang answer—'I am here.'

And his heart sprang, and sank again : and she

Spake, saying, 'What would my knightly
lord with me?'

And Tristram : 'Hath my lady watched all
night

Beside me, and I knew not? God requite
Her love for comfort shown a man nigh dead.'

'Yea, God shall surely guerdon it,' she
said,

'Who hath kept me all my days through to
this hour.'

And Tristram : 'God alone hath grace and
power

To pay such grace toward one unworthier
shown

Than ever durst, save only of God alone,
Crave pardon yet and comfort, as I would
Crave now for charity if my heart were good,
But as a coward's it fails me, even for shame.'

Then seemed her face a pale funereal
flame

That burns down slow by midnight, as she
said :

'Speak, and albeit thy bidding spake me
dead,

God's love renounce me if it were not done.'

And Tristram : 'When the sea-line takes
the sun

That now should be not far off sight from
far,

Look if there come not with the morning
star

My ship bound hither from the northward
back,

And if the sail be white thereof or black.'

And knowing the soothfast sense of his
desire

So sore the heart within her raged like fire
She could not wring forth of her lips a word,
But bowing made sign how humbly had she
heard.

And the sign given made light his heart ; and
she

Set her face hard against the yearning sea
Now all athirst with trembling trust of hope
To see the sudden gates of sunrise ope ;

But thirstier yearned the heart whose fiery
gate

Lay wide that vengeance might come in to
hate.

And Tristram lay at thankful rest, and
thought

Now surely life nor death could grieve him
aught,

Since past was now life's anguish as a breath,
And surely past the bitterness of death.

For seeing he had found at these her hands
this grace,

It could not be but yet some breathing-space
Might leave him life to look again on love's
own face.

'Since if for death's sake,' in his heart he
said,

'Even she take pity upon me quick or dead,
How shall not even from God's hand be com-
passion shed?

For now bears dawn, how weak soe'er and
wan,

And sweet ere death, men fable, sings the
swan.

So seems the Swan my signal from the sea
To sound a song that sweetens death to me

Clasped round about with radiance from above
Of dawn, and closer clasped on earth by love.
Shall all things brighten, and this my sign be
dark?

And high from heaven suddenly rang the
lark,

Triumphant ; and the far first refluent ray
Filled all the hollow darkness full with day.

And on the deep sky's verge a fluctuant light
Gleamed, grew, shone, strengthened into per-
fect sight,

As bowed and dipped and rose again the sail's
clear white.

And swift and steadfast as a sea-mew's wing
It neared before the wind, as fain to bring

Comfort, and shorten yet its narrowing track.
And she that saw looked hardly toward him
back,

Saying, 'Ay, the ship comes surely ; but her
sail is black.'

And fain he would have sprung upright, and
seen,

And spoken : but strong death struck sheer
between,

And darkness closed as iron round his head :
And smitten through the heart lay Tristram
dead.

And scarce the word had flown abroad, and
wail
Risen, ere to shoreward came the snowbright
sail,
And lightly forth leapt Ganhardine on land,
And led from ship with swift and reverent
hand
Iseult : and round them up from all the
crowd

Broke the great wail for Tristram out aloud.
And ere her ear might hear her heart had
heard,

Nor sought she sign for witness of the word ;
But came and stood above him newly dead,
And felt his death upon her : and her head
Bowed, as to reach the spring that slakes all
drouth ;

And their four lips became one silent mouth.
So came their hour on them that were in life
Tristram and Iseult : so from love and strife
The stroke of love's own hand felt last and
best

Gave them deliverance to perpetual rest.
So, crownless of the wreaths that life had
wound,

They slept, with flower of tenderer comfort
crowned :

From bondage and the fear of time set free,
And all the yoke of space on earth and sea
Cast as a curb for ever : nor might now
Fear and desire bid soar their souls or bow,
Lift up their hearts or break them : doubt nor
grief

More now might move them, dread nor dis-
belief

Touch them with shadowy cold or fiery sting,
Nor sleepless languor with its weary wing,
Nor harsh estrangement, born of time's vain
breath,

Nor change, a darkness deeper far than death.
And round the sleep that fell around them
then

Earth lies, not wrapped, nor records wrought
of men

Rise up for timeless token : but their sleep
Hath round it like a raiment all the deep ;
No change or gleam or gloom of sun and rain,
But all time long the might of all the main
Spread round them as round earth soft heaven
is spread,

And peace more strong than death round all
the dead.

For death is of an hour, and after death
Peace : nor for aught that fear or fancy saith,
Nor even for very love's own sake shall strife
Perplex again that perfect peace with life.

And if, as men that mourn may deem or
dream,

Rest haply here than there might sweeter
seem,

And sleep, that lays one hand on all, more
good

By some sweet grave's grace given of wold or
wood

Or clear high glen or sunbright wind-worn
down

Than where life thunders through the tram-
pling town

With daylong feet and nightlong overhead,
What grave may cast such grace round any
dead,

What so sublime sweet sepulchre may be
For all that life leaves mortal, as the sea ?

And these, rapt forth perforce from earthly
ground,

These twain the deep sea guards, and girdles
round

Their sleep more deep than any sea's gulf lies,
Though changeless with the change in shifting
skies,

Nor mutable with seasons : for the grave
That held them once, being weaker than a
wave,

The waves long since have buried : though
their tomb

Was royal that by ruth's relenting doom
Men gave them in Tintagel : for the word

Took wing which thrilled all piteous hearts
that heard

The word wherethrough their lifelong lot stood
shown,

And when the long sealed springs of fate were
known,

The blind bright innocence of lips that quaffed
Love, and the marvel of the mastering draught,

And all the fraughtage of the fateful bark,
Loud like a child upon them wept King Mark,

Seeing round the sword's hilt which long since
had fought

For Cornwall's love a scroll of writing
wrought,

A scripture writ of Tristram's hand, wherein
Lay bare the sinless source of all their sin,

No choice of will, but chance and sorcerous
art,

With prayer of him for pardon : and his
heart

Was molten in him, wailing as he kissed
 Each with that kiss of kinship—' Had I wist,
 Ye had never sinned nor died thus, nor had I
 Borne in this doom that bade you sin and die
 So sore a part of sorrow.' And the king
 Built for their tomb a chapel bright like spring
 With flower-soft wealth of branching tracery
 made
 Fair as the frondage each fleet year sees fade,
 That should not fall till many a year were
 done.
 There slept they wedded under moon and sun
 And change of stars : and through the case-
 ments came
 Midnight and noon girt round with shadow
 and flame
 To illumine their grave or veil it : till at last
 On these things too was doom as darkness
 cast :

For the strong sea hath swallowed wall and
 tower,
 And where their limbs were laid in woful hour
 For many a fathom gleams and moves and
 moans
 The tide that sweeps above their coffined bones
 In the wrecked chancel by the shivered shrine :
 Nor where they sleep shall moon or sunlight
 shine
 Nor man look down for ever : none shall
 say,
 Here once, or here, Tristram and Iseult lay :
 But peace they have that none may gain who
 live,
 And rest about them that no love can give,
 And over them, while death and life shall
 be,
 The light and sound and darkness of the
 sea.

ATALANTA IN CALYDON.

A TRAGEDY.

Τοὺς ζῶντας εὖ δρᾶν. κατθανόν δ' πᾶς ἐνὶ
Γῇ καὶ σκιά· τὸ μηδὲν εἰς οὐδὲν ῥίπτει.

EUR. FR. MEL. 20. (537.)

TO THE MEMORY

OF

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

I NOW DEDICATE, WITH EQUAL AFFECTION, REVERENCE, AND REGRET,
A POEM INSCRIBED TO HIM WHILE YET ALIVE IN WORDS WHICH
ARE NOW RETAINED BECAUSE THEY WERE LAID BEFORE HIM ;
AND TO WHICH, RATHER THAN CANCEL THEM, I HAVE
ADDED SUCH OTHERS AS WERE EVOKED BY THE
NEWS OF HIS DEATH : THAT THOUGH LOSING
THE PLEASURE I MAY NOT LOSE THE HONOR
OF INSCRIBING IN FRONT OF MY WORK
THE HIGHEST OF CONTEMPORARY
NAMES.

ἄγχο δὴ Βορέθηεν ὑπότρομος· ἀλλὰ σε Νύμφαι
 ἤγαγον ὑσπασίαν ἡδύπνοοι καθ' ἅλα,
 πληρούσαι μέλιτος θεύθεν στόμα, μὴ τι Ποσειδῶν
 Βλάβῃη, ἐν ὧσιν ἔχων σὴν μελίγηρυν ὄπα,
 τοῖος ἀοιδὸς ἔφυς· ἡμεῖς δ' ἔτι κλαίομεν, οἳ σου
 δυνόμεθ' οἰχομένου, καὶ σε ποθοῦμεν αἰεὶ.
 εἶπε δὲ Πιερίδων τις ἀναστρεφθεῖσα πρὸς ἄλλην·
 ἦλθεν, ἰδοῦ, πάντων φίλτατος ἦλθε βροτῶν,
 στέμματα δρεψόμενος νεοθηλέα χερσὶ γεραιαῖς,
 καὶ πολὺν δάφναις ἀμφεκαλύψε κῆρα
 ἡδύ τι Σικελικαῖς ἐπὶ πηκτίσιν, ἡδύ τι χόρδαῖς,
 ἄσόμενος· πολλὴν γὰρ μετέβαλλε λύραν,
 πολλάκι δ' ἐν βήσσαισι καθήμενον εὔρεν Ἀπόλλων
 ἄνθεσι δ' ἔστεψεν, τερπνὰ δ' ἔδωκε λέγειν,
 Πᾶνα τ' αἰέμνηστόν τε Πιτυν Κόρυθον τε δύσεδρον,
 ἦν τ' ἐφίλησε θεὰν θνητὸς Ἀμαδρυάδα·
 ποντον δ' ἐν μεγάροισιν ἐκοίμισε Κυμοδάμειαν.
 τήν τ' Ἀγαμεμνονίαν παῖδ' ἀπέδωκε πατρὶ,
 πρὸς δ' ἱεροὺς Δελφοὺς θεόπληκτον ἔπεμψεν Ὀρέστην
 τειρόμενον στυγεραῖς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα θεαῖς

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ὦχο δὴ καὶ ἀνευθε φίλων καὶ ἀνευθεν ἀοιδῆς,
 δρεψόμενος μαλακῆς ἄνθεα Περσεφόνης.
 ὦχο· κοῦκ ἔτ' ἔσει, κοῦκ αὖ ποτέ σοι παρεδοῦμαι
 ἄζόμενος, χειρῶν χερσὶ θιγῶν ὁσίαις·
 νῦν δ' αὖ μνησάμενον γλυκύπικρος ὑπήλυθεν οἰδῶς,
 οἷα τυχῶν οἴου πρὸς σέθεν οἶος ἔχω·
 οὔποτε σοῖς γέρον, ὄμμα φίλοις φίλον ὄμμασι τέρψω,
 σῆς, γέρον, ὑψάμενος, φίλτατε, δεξιτερᾶς·
 ἦ ψαφάρᾳ κόνις, ἦ ψαφαρὺς βίος ἔστι· τί τουτων
 μεῖον ἐφημερίων ; οὐ κόνις ἀλλὰ βίος·
 ἀλλά μοι ἡδύτερός γε πέλεις πολὺ τῶν ἔτ' ἐόντων,
 ἔπλεο γάρ· σοὶ μὴν ταῦτα θανόντι φέρω,
 παῦρα μὲν, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ κῆρος ἐτήτυμα· μῆδ' ἀποτρεφθῆς
 πρὸς δὲ βαλὼν ἔτι νῦν ἥσυχον ὄμμα δέχου.
 οὐ γὰρ ἔχω, μέγα δὴ τι θέλω, σέθεν ἄξια δοῦναι
 θαπτομένου περ ἀπῶν· οὐ γὰρ ἔνεστιν ἔμοι·
 οὐδὲ μελικρήτου παρέχειν γάνος· εἰ γὰρ ἐνείη
 καὶ σε χεροῖν ψαῦσαι καὶ σέ ποτ' αὖθις ἰδεῖν,
 δάκρυσί τε σπονδαῖς τε κῆρα φίλον ἀμφιπολεῦν
 ὀφθαλμούς θ' ἱεροὺς σοὺς ἱερόν τε δέμας.

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εἴθ' ὄφελον. μάλα γὰρ τάδ' ἂν ἀμπαύσειε μερίμνης·
 νῦν δὲ πρόσσωθεν ἄνευ σήματος οἴκτον ἔγω·
 οὐδ' ἐπιτυμβίδιον θρηνῶ μέλος, ἀλλ' ἀπαμυνθεῖς,
 ἀλλ' ἀπάνευθεν ἔχων ἀμφιδακρυτὰ πάθη.
 ἀλλὰ σὺ χαῖρε θανῶν, καὶ ἔχων γέρας ἴσθι πρὸς ἀνδρῶν
 πρὸς τε θεῶν, ἐνέροις εἴ τις ἔπεςτι θεός.
 χαῖρε γέρον, φίλε χαῖρε πατέρ, πολὺ φέρτατ' ἰοιδῶν
 ὦν ἵδομεν, πολὺ δὴ φέρτατ' ἀεισημένων·
 χαῖρε, καὶ ὄλβον ἔχους, οἷόν γε θανόντες ἔχουσιν,
 ἥσυχίαν ἔχθρας καὶ φιλότῃτος ἄτερ.
 σήματος οἰχομένου σοι μνήματ' ἐς ὕστερον ἔσται,
 σοὶ τε φίλῃ μνήμῃ μνήματος οἰχομένου·
 ὃν Χάριτες κλαίουσι θεαὶ, κλαίει δ' Ἀφροδίτη
 καλλιχόροις Μουκῶν τερψαμένη στεφάνοις·
 οὐ γὰρ ἅπαξ ἱεροῦς ποτε γῆρας ἔτριψεν ἀοιδούς·
 τήνδε τὸ σὸν φαίνει μνήμα τύδ' ἀγλαίαν.
 ἧ φίλος ἦς μακάρεσσι βροτὸς σοὶ δ' εἴ τιτι Νύμφαι
 δῶρα ποθεινὰ νέμειν, ὕστατα δῶρ', ἔδοσαν.
 τὰς νῦν χάλκεος ὕπνος ἔβη καὶ ἀνιήνεμος αἰὼν,
 καὶ συνθαπτομένοι μοῖραν ἔχουσι μίαν.
 εὐδαίει καὶ σὺ, καλὸν καὶ ἀγάκλυτον ἐν χθονὶ κοίλῃ
 ὕπνου ἐφικόμενος, σῆς ἀπόνοσφι πάτρας,
 τῆλε παρὰ ξανθοῦ Τυρσηνικὸν οἶδμα καθεύδεις
 νάματος, ἧ δ' ἔτι σὴ μαῖά σε γαῖα ποθεῖ,
 ἀλλ' ἀπέχεις, καὶ πρόσθε φιλόπτολις ὦν περ ἀπείπας·
 εὐδαίει· μάκαρ δ' ἡμῖν οὐδ' ἀμέγαρτος ἔσει.
 βαιὸς ἐπιχθονίων γε χρόνος καὶ μοῖρα κρατήσῃ,
 τοὺς δέ ποτ' εὐφροσύνῃ τοὺς δέ ποτ' ἄλγος ἔχει·
 πολλάκι δ' ἡ βλάπτει φάος ἡ σκότος ἀμφικαλύπτει
 μυρομένους, δάκνει δ' ὕπνος ἐγρηγορούτας·
 οὐδ' ἔθ' ὅτ' ἐν τύμβοιςσι κάτέδραθεν ὄμμα θανόντων
 ἧ σκότος ἧ τι φέος διήξεται ἥελιου·
 οὐδ' ὄναρ ἐννύχιον καὶ ἐνύπνιον οὐδ' ὕπαρ ἔσται
 ἧ ποτε τερπομένοις ἧ ποτ' ὀδυρομένοις·
 ἀλλ' ἕνα πάντες αἰεὶ θᾶκον συνέχουσι καὶ ἔδραν
 ἀντὶ βροτῆς ἄβροτον, καλλιμον ἀντι κακῆς.

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THE ARGUMENT.

ALTHÆA, daughter of Thestius and Eurythemis, queen of Calydon, being with child of Meleager her first-born son, dreamed that she brought forth a brand burning; and upon his birth came the three Fates and prophesied of him three things, namely these; that he should have great strength of his hands, and good fortune in this life, and that he should live no longer when the brand then in the fire were consumed: wherefore his mother plucked it forth and kept it by her. And the child being a man grown sailed with Jason after the fleece of gold, and won himself great praise of all men living; and when the tribes of the north and west made war upon Ætolia, he fought against their army and scattered it. But Artemis, having at the first stirred up these tribes to war against Ceneus, king of Calydon, because he had offered sacrifice to all the gods saving her alone, but her he had forgotten to honor, was yet more wroth because of the destruction of this army, and sent upon the land of Calydon a wild boar, which slew many and wasted all their increase; but him could none slay, and many went against him and perished. Then were all the chief men of Greece gathered together, and among them Atalanta, daughter of Iasius the Arcadian, a virgin; for whose sake Artemis let slay the boar, seeing she favored the maiden greatly; and Meleager having despatched it gave the spoil thereof to Atalanta, as one beyond measure enamored of her; but the brethren of Athaa his mother, Toxeus and Plexippus, with such others as misliked that she only should bear off the praise whereas many had borne the labor, laid wait for her to take away her spoil; but Meleager fought against them and slew them: whom when Althæa their sister beheld and knew to be slain of her son, she waxed for wrath and sorrow like as one mad, and taking the brand whereby the measure of her son's life was meted to him, she cast it upon a fire; and with the wasting thereof his life likewise wasted away, that being brought back to his father's house he died in a brief space; and his mother also endured not long after for very sorrow; and this was his end, and the end of that hunting.

*ἴστω δ' ὅστις οὐχ ὑπόπτερος
φροντίσιν δαείας
τὰν ἁ παιδολύμας τάλαινα Θεστίας μήσατο
πυρραῇ τινα πρόνοιαν,
καταίθουσα παίδος δαφνοῖν
δαλὸν ἥλικ' ἐπεὶ μολεῖν
ματρίθεν κελάδῃσε
σύμμετράν τε διαί βίου
υιοράκραντον ἐς ἄμαρ.*

ÆSCH. Cho. 602-612.

THE PERSONS.

CHIEF HUNTSMAN.
CHORUS.
ALTHÆA.
MELEAGER.
CENEUS.
ATALANTA.

TOXEUS.
PLEXIPPUS.
HERALD.
MESSENGER.
SECOND MESSENGER.

ATALANTA IN CALYDON.

CHIEF HUNTSMAN.

MAIDEN, and mistress of the months
and stars
Now folded in the flowerless fields of
heaven,
Goddess whom all gods love with threefold
heart,
Being treble in thy divided deity,
A light for dead men and dark hours, a
foot
Swift on the hills as morning, and a hand
To all things fierce and fleet that roar and
range
Mortal, with gentler shafts than snow or
sleep;
Hear now and help and lift no violent
hand,
But favorable and fair as thine eye's beam
Hidden and shown in heaven; for I all
night
Amid the king's hounds and the hunting
men
Have wrought and worshipped toward
thee: nor shall man
See goodlier hounds or deadlier edge of
spears;
But for the end, that lies unreached at yet
Between the hands and on the knee of
gods.
O fair-faced sun killing the stars and dews
And dreams and desolation of the night!
Rise up, shine, stretch thine hand out,
with thy bow
Touch the most dimmest height of trembling
heaven,
And burn and break the dark about thy
ways,
Shot through and through with arrows; let
thine hair
Lighten as flame above that flameless
shell

Which was the moon, and thine eyes fill
the world,
And thy lips kindle with swift beams; let
earth
Laugh, and the long sea fiery from thy
feet
Through all the roar and ripple of stream
ing springs
And foam in reddening flakes and flying
flowers
Shaken from hands and blown from lips of
nymphs
Whose hair or breast divides the wander-
ing wave
With salt close tresses cleaving lock to
lock,
All gold, or shuddering and unfurrowed
snow;
And all the winds about thee with their
wings,
And fountain-heads of all the watered
world;
Each horn of Achelous, and the green
Euenus, wedded with the straitening sea.
For in fair time thou comest; come also
thou,
Twin-born with him, and virgin, Artemis,
And give our spears their spoil, the wild
boar's hide.
Sent in thine anger against us for sin
done
And bloodless alters without wine or fire.
Him now consume thou; for thy sacrifice
With sanguine-shining steam divides the
dawn,
And one, the maiden rose of all thy maids,
Arcadian Atalanta, snowy-souled,
Fair as the snow and footed as the wind
From Ladon and well-wooded Manalus
Over the firm hills and the fleeting sea
Hast thou drawn hither, and many an
armed king,

Heroes, the crown of men, like gods in fight.

Moreover out of all the Ætolian land,
From the full-flowered, Lelantian pasturage
To what of fruitful field the son of Zeus
Won from the roaring river and laboring
sea

When the wild god shrank in his horn and fled

And foamed and lessened through his
wrathful fords,

Leaving clear lands that steamed with
sudden sun,

These virgins with the lightening of the
day

Bring thee fresh wreaths and their own
sweeter hair,

Luxurious locks and flower-like mixed
with flowers,

Clean offering, and chaste hymns; but me
the time

Divides from these things; whom do thou
not less

Help and give honor, and to mine hounds
good speed.

And edge to spears, and luck to each man's
hand.

CHORUS.

When the hounds of spring are on winter's
traces,

The mother of months in meadow or
plain

Fills the shadows and windy places

With lip of leaves and ripple of rain;
And the brown bright nightingale amorous

Is half assuaged for Itylus,
For the Thracian ships and the foreign
faces,

The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of
quivers,

Maiden most perfect, lady of light,

With a noise of winds and many rivers,

With a clamor of waters, and with
might;

Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,

Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;

For the faint east quickens, the wan west
shivers,

Round the feet of the day and the feet
of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing
to her.

Fold our hands round her knees, and
cling?

O that man's heart were as fire and could
spring to her,

Fire, or the strength of the streams
that spring!

For the stars and the winds are unto her

As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;

For the risen stars and the fallen cling to
her,

And the southwest-wind and the west-
wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,

And all the season of snows and sins;

The days dividing lover and lover,

The light that loses, the night that
wins;

And time remembered is grief forgotten,

And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,

And in green underwood and cover

Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,

Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,

The faint fresh flame of the young year
flashes

From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;

And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,

And the oat is heard above the lyre,

And the hoofed heel of a satyr crushes

The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-
root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,

Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,

Follows with dancing and fills with de-
light

The Mænad and the Bassarid;

And soft as lips that laugh and hide

The laughing leaves of the trees divide,

And screen from seeing and leave in sight

The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair

Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;

The wild vine slipping down leaves bare

Her bright breast shortening into
sighs;

The wild vine slips with the weight of its
leaves,

But the berried ivy catches and cleaves

To the limbs that glitter, the feet that
scare

The wolf that follows, the fawn that
flies.

ALTHÆA.

What do ye singing? what is this ye sing?

CHORUS.

Flowers bring we, and pure lips that please
the gods,
And raiment meet for service; lest the day
Turn sharp with all its honey in our lips.

ALTHÆA

Night, a black hound, follows the white
fawn day,
Swifter than dreams the white flown feet
of sleep;
Will ye pray back the night with any
prayers?
And though the spring put back a little
while
Winter, and snows that plague all men for
sin,
And the iron time of cursing, yet I know
Spring shall be ruined with the rain, and
storm
Eat up like fire the ashen autumn days.
I marvel what men do with prayers awake
Who dream and die with dreaming; any
god,
Yea the least god of all things called di-
vine,
Is more than sleep and waking; yet we
say,
Perchance by praying a man shall match
his god.
For if sleep have no mercy, and man's
dreams
Bite to the blood and burn into the bone,
What shall this man do waking? By the
gods,
He shall not pray to dream sweet things
to-night,
Having dreamt once more bitter things
than death.

CHORUS.

Queen, but what is it that hath burnt thine
heart?
For thy speech flickers like a blown-out
flame.

ALTHÆA.

Look, ye say well, and know not what ye
say;

For all my sleep is turned into a fire,
And all my dreams to stuffs that kindles it.

CHORUS.

Yet one doth well being patient of the
gods.

ALTHÆA.

Yea, lest they smite us with some four-foot
plague.

CHORUS.

But when time spreads find out some herb
for it.

ALTHÆA.

And with their healing herbs infect our
blood.

CHORUS.

What ails thee to be jealous of their ways?

ALTHÆA.

What if they give us poisonous drinks for
wine?

CHORUS.

They have their will; much talking mends
it not.

ALTHÆA.

And gall for milk, and cursing for a prayer?

CHORUS.

Have they not given life, and the end of
life?

ALTHÆA.

Lo, where they heal, they help not; thus
they do,

They mock us with a little piteousness,
And we say prayers and weep; but at the
last,
Sparing awhile, they smite and spare no
whit.

CHORUS.

Small praise man gets dispraising the high
gods;

What have they done that thou dishonorest
them?

ALTHÆA.

First Artemis for all this harried land
I praise not, and for wasting of the boar
That mars with tooth and tusk and fiery
feet

Green pasture and the grace of standing
corn.

And meadow and marsh with springs and
unblown leaves,

Flocks and swift herds and all that bite
sweet grass,

I praise her not ; what things are these to praise ?

CHORUS.

But when the king did sacrifice, and gave
Each god fair dues of wheat and blood and wine,

Her not with bloodshed nor burnt-offering
Revered he, nor with salt or cloven cake ;
Wherefore being wroth she plagued the land ; but now

Takes off from us fate and her heavy things.

Which deed of these twain were not good to praise ?

For a just deed looks always either way
With blameless eyes, and mercy is no fault.

ALTHÆA.

Yea, but a curse she hath sent above all these

To hurt us where she healed us, and hath lit

Fire where the old fire went out, and where the wind

Slackened, hath blown on us with deadlier air.

CHORUS.

What storm is this that tightens all our sail ?

ALTHÆA.

Love, a thwart sea-wind full of rain and foam.

CHORUS.

Whence blown, and born under what stormier star ?

ALTHÆA.

Southward across Euenus from the sea.

CHORUS.

Thy speech turns toward Arcadia like blown wind.

ALTHÆA.

Sharp as the north sets when the snows are out.

CHORUS.

Nay, for this maiden hath no touch of love.

ALTHÆA.

I would she had sought in some cold gulf of sea

Love, or in dens where strange beasts lurk, or fire,

Or snows on the extreme hills or iron land

Where no spring is ; I would she had sought therein

And found, or ever love had found her here.

CHORUS.

She is holier than all holy days or things,
The sprinkled water or fume of perfect fire ;

Chaste, dedicated to pure prayers, and filled

With higher thoughts than heaven ; a maiden clean,

Pure iron, fashioned for a sword ; and man

She loves not ; what should one such do with love ?

ALTHÆA.

Look you, I speak not as one light of wit,

But as a queen speaks, being heart-vexed ; for oft

I hear my brothers wrangling in mid hall,
And am not moved ; and my son chiding them,

And these things nowise move me, but I know

Foolish and wise men must be to the end,
And feed myself with patience ; but this most,

This moves me, that for wise men as for fools

Love is one thing, an evil thing, and turns
Choice words and wisdom into fire and air.

And in the end shall no joy come, but grief,

Sharp words and soul's division and fresh tears

Flower-wise upon the old root of tears brought forth,

Fruit-wise upon the old flower of tears sprung up,

Pitiful sighs, and much regrafted pain.

These things are in my presage, and myself

Am part of them and know not ; but in dreams

The gods are heavy on me, and all the fates

Shed fire across my eyelids mixed with night,

And burn me blind, and disilluminate
My sense of seeing, and my perspicuous soul

Darken with vision ; seeing I see not, hear

And hearing am not holpen, but mine eyes
 Stain many tender broideries in the bed
 Drawn up about my face that I may weep
 And the king wake not; and my brow, and
 lips
 Tremble and sob in sleeping, like swift
 flames
 That tremble, or water when it sobs with
 heat
 Kindled from under; and my tears fill my
 breast
 And speak the fair-dyed pillows round the
 king
 With barren showers and saltier than the
 sea,
 Such dreams divide me dreaming; for
 long since
 I dreamed that out of this my womb had
 sprung
 Fire and a firebrand; this was ere my son,
 Meleager, a goodly flower in fields of fight,
 Felt the light touch him coming forth, and
 wailed
 Childlike; but yet he was not; and in time
 I bare him, and my heart was great; for
 yet
 So royally was never strong man born,
 Nor queen so nobly bore as noble a thing
 As this my son was: such a birth God sent
 And such a grace to bear it. Then came
 in
 Three weaving women, and span each a
 thread,
 Saying This for strength and That for luck,
 and one
 Saying Till the brand upon the hearth burn
 down,
 So long shall this man see good days and
 live.
 And I with gathered raiment from the bed
 Sprang, and drew forth the brand, and cast
 on it
 Water, and trod the flame barefoot, and
 crushed
 With naked hand spark beaten out of
 spark
 And blew against and quenched it; for I
 said,
 These are the most high Fates that dwell
 with us,
 And we find favor a little in their sight,
 A little, and more we miss of, and much
 time
 Foils us; howbeit they have pitied me, O
 son,

And thee most piteous, thee a tenderer thing
 Than any flower of fleshly seed alive.
 Wherefore I kissed and hid him with my
 hands,
 And covered under arms and hair, and
 wept,
 And feared to touch him with my tears,
 and laughed;
 So light a thing was this man, grown so
 great
 Men cast their heads back, seeing against
 the sun
 Blaze the armed man carven on his shield,
 and hear
 The laughter of little bells along the brace
 Ring, as birds singing or flutes blown, and
 watch,
 High up the cloven shadow of either plume
 Divide the bright light of the brass, and
 make
 His helmet as a windy and wintering
 moon
 Seen through blown cloud and plume-like
 drift, when ships
 Drive, and men strive with all the sea, and
 oars
 Break, and the beaks dip under, drinking
 death;
 Yet was he then but a span long, and
 moaned
 With inarticulate mouth inseparate words,
 And with blind lips and fingers wrung my
 breast
 Haid, and thrust out with foolish hands
 and feet,
 Murmuring; but those gray women with
 bound hair
 Who fright the gods frightened not him; he
 laughed
 Seeing them, and pushed out hands to feel
 and haul
 Distaff and thread, intangible; but they
 Passed, and I hid the brand, and in my
 heart
 Laughed likewise, having all my will of
 heaven.
 But now I know not if to left or right
 The gods have drawn us hither; for
 again
 I dreamt, and saw the black brand burst
 on fire
 As a branch bursts in flower, and saw the
 flame
 Fade flower-wise, and Death came and
 with dry lips

Blew the charred ash into my breast; and
Love

Trampled the ember and crushed it with
swift feet.

This I have also at heart; that not for me,
Not for me only or son of mine, O girls,
The gods have wrought life, and desire of
life,

Heart's love and heart's division; but for
all

There shines one sun and one wind blows
till night.

And when night comes the wind sinks and
the sun,

And there is no light after, and no storm,
But sleep and much forgetfulness of
things.

In such wise I gat knowledge of the gods
Years hence, and heard high sayings of one
most wise,

Eurythemis my mother, who beheld
With eyes alive and spake with lips of
these

As one on earth disflashed and disallied
From breath or blood corruptible; such
gifts

Time gave her, and an equal soul to these
And equal face to all things; thus she said.
But whatsoever intolerable or glad
The swift hours weave and unweave, I go
hence

Full of mine own soul, perfect of myself,
Toward mine and me sufficient; and what
chance

The gods cast lots for and shake out on us,
That shall we take, and that much bear
withal

And now, before these gather to the hunt,
I will go arm my son, and bring him forth,
Lest love or some man's anger work him
harm.

CHORUS.

Before the beginning of years,

There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;

Grief, with a glass that ran;

Pleasure, with pain for leaven;

Summer, with flowers that fell;

Remembrance fallen from heaven,

And madness risen from hell;

Strength without hands to smite;

Love that endures for a breath;

Night, the shadow of light,

And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand

Fire, and the falling of tears,

And a measure of sliding sand

From under the feet of the years;

And froth and drift of the sea;

And dust of the laboring earth;

And bodies of things to be

In the houses of death and of birth;

And wrought with weeping and laughter,

And fashioned with loathing and love,

With life before and after

And death beneath and above,

For a day and a night and a morrow,

That his strength might endure for a span

With travail and heavy sorrow,

The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south

They gathered as unto strife;

They breathed upon his mouth,

They filled his body with life;

Eyesight and speech they wrought

For the veils of the soul therein,

A time for labor and thought,

A time to serve and to sin;

They gave him light in his ways,

And love, and a space for delight,

And beauty and length of days,

And night, and sleep in the night.

His speech is a burning fire;

With his lips he travaileth;

In his heart is a blind desire,

In his eyes foreknowledge of death;

He weaves, and is clothed with derision;

Sows, and he shall not reap;

His life is a watch or a vision

Between a sleep and a sleep.

MELEAGER.

O sweet new heaven and air without a star,
Fair day, be fair and welcome, as to men
With deeds to do and praise to pluck from
thee.

Come forth a child, born with clear sound
and light,

With laughter and swift limbs and prosper-
ous looks;

That this great hunt with heroes for the
hounds

May leave thee memorable and us well
sped.

ALTHÆA.

Son, first I praise thy prayer, then bid thee
speed;

But the gods hear men's hands before their lips,
And heed beyond all crying and sacrifice
Light of things done and noise of laboring men.

But thou being armed and perfect for the deed,
Abide ; for like rain-flakes in a wind they grow,
The men thy fellows, and the choice of the world,
Bound to root out the tuskèd plague, and leave
Thanks and safe days and peace in Calydon.

MELEAGER.

For the whole city and all the low-lying land
Flames, and the soft air sounds with them that come ;
The gods give all these fruit of all their works.

ALTHÆA.

Set thine eye thither and fix thy spirit and say
Whom there thou knowest ; for sharp mixed shadow and wind
Blown up between the morning and the mist,
With steam of steeds and flash of bridle or wheel,
And fire, and parcels of the broken dawn,
And dust divided by hard light, and spears
That shine and shift as the edge of wild beasts' eyes,
Smite upon mine ; so fiery their blind edge
Burns, and bright points break up and baffle day.

MELEAGER.

The first, for many I know not, being far off,
Peleus the Larissæan, couched with whom
Sleeps the white sea-bred wife and silver-shod,
Fair as fled foam, a goddess ; and their son
Most swift and splendid of men's children born,
Most like a god, full of the future fame.

ALTHÆA.

Who are these shining like one sundered star ?

MELEAGER.

Thy sister's sons, a double flower of men.

ALTHÆA.

O sweetest kin to me in all the world,
O twin-born blood of Leda, gracious heads
Like kindled lights in untempestuous heaven,
Fair flower-like stars on the iron foam of fight,
With what glad heart and kindliness of soul,
Even to the staining of both eyes with tears
And kindling of warm eyelids with desire,
A great way oft I greet you, and rejoice
Seeing you so fair, and moulded like as gods.
Far off ye come, and least in years of these,
But lordliest, but worth love to look upon.

MELEAGER.

Even such (for sailing hither I saw far hence,
And where Eurotas hollows his moist rock
Nigh Sparta with a strenuous-hearted stream)
Even such I saw their sisters ; one swan-white,
The little Helen, and less fair than she
Fair Clytemnestra, grave as pasturing fawns
Who feed and fear some arrow ; but at whiles,
As one smitten with love or wrung with joy,
She laughs and lightens with her eyes, and then
Weeps ; whereat Helen, having laughed, weeps too,
And the other chides her, and she being chid speaks naught,
But cheeks and lips and eyelids kisses her,
Laughing ; so fare they, as in their bloomless bud
And full of unblown life, the blood of gods.

ALTHÆA.

Sweet days befell them and good loves and lords,
And tender and temperate honors of the hearth,
Peace, and a perfect life and blameless bed.
But who shows next an eagle wrought in gold,

That flames and beats broad wings against
the sun,
And with void mouth gapes after emptier
prey?

MELEAGER.

Know by that sign the reign of Telamon
Between the fierce mouths of the encoun-
tering brine
On the strait reefs of twice-washed Salamis.

ALTHÆA.

For like one great of hand he bears himself,
Vine-chapleted, with savor of the sea,
Glittering as wine and moving as a wave.
But who girt round there roughly follows
him?

MELEAGER.

Ancaeus, great of hand, an iron bulk,
Lwo-edged for fight as the axe against his
arm,
Who drives against the surge of stormy
spears
Full-sailed; him Cepheus follows, his twin-
born,
Chief name next his of all Arcadian men.

ALTHÆA.

Praise be with men abroad; chaste lives
with us,
Home-keeping days and household rever-
ences.

MELEAGER.

Next by the left unsandalled foot know
thou
The sail and oar of this Ætolian land,
Thy brethren, Toxeus and the violent-
souled
Plexippus, over-swift with hand and tongue;
For hands are fruitful, but the ignorant
mouth
Blows and corrupts their work with barren
breath.

ALTHÆA.

Speech too bears fruit, being worthy; and
air blows down
Things poisonous, and high-seated violen-
ces,
And with charmed words and songs have
men put out
Wild evil, and the fire of tyrannies.

MELEAGER.

Yea, all things have they, save the gods
and love.

ALTHÆA.

Love thou the law and cleave to things
ordained.

MELEAGER.

Law lives upon their lips whom these
applaud.

ALTHÆA.

How sayest thou these? what god applauds
new things?

MELEAGER.

Zeus, who hath fear and custom under foot.

ALTHÆA.

But loves not laws thrown down and lives
awry.

MELEAGER.

Yet is not less himself than his own law.

ALTHÆA.

Nor shifts and shuffles old things up and
down.

MELEAGER.

But what he will remoulds and discreates.

ALTHÆA.

Much, but not this, that each thing live its
life.

MELEAGER.

Nor only live, but lighten and lift up
higher.

ALTHÆA.

Pride breaks itself, and too much gained
is gone?

MELEAGER.

Things gained are gone, but great things
done endure.

ALTHÆA.

Child, if a man serve law through all his
life

And with his whole heart worship, him all
 gods
 Praise ; but who loves it only with his lips,
 And not in heart and deed desiring it
 Hides a perverse will with obsequious
 words,
 Him heaven infatuates and his twin-born
 fate
 Tracks, and gains on him, scenting sins
 far off.
 And the swift hounds of violent death
 devour.
 Be man at one with equal-minded gods,
 So shall he prosper ; not through laws torn
 up,
 Violated rule and a new face of things.
 A woman armed makes war upon herself,
 Unwomanlike, and treads down use and
 wont
 And the sweet common honor that she
 hath,
 Love, and the cry of children, and the
 hand
 Trothplight and mutual mouth of mar-
 riages.
 This doth she, being unloved ; whom if
 one love,
 Not fire nor iron and the wide-mouthed
 wars
 Are deadlier than her lips or braider hair.
 For of the one comes poison, and a curse
 Falls from the other and burns the lives of
 men.
 But thou, son, be not filled with evil
 dreams,
 Nor with desire of these things ; for with
 time
 Blind love burns out ; but if one feed it
 full
 Till some discoloring stain dyes all his life,
 He shall keep nothing praiseworthy, nor
 die
 The sweet wise death of old men honor-
 able,
 Who have lived out all the length of all
 their years
 Blameless, and seen well-pleased the face
 of gods,
 And without shame and without fear have
 wrought
 Things memorable, and while their days
 held out
 In sight of all men and the sun's great
 light

Have gat them glory and given of their
 own praise
 To the earth that bare them and the day
 that bred,
 Home friends and far-off hospitalities,
 And filled with gracious and memorial
 fame
 Lands loved of summer or washed by
 violent seas.
 Towns populous and many unfooted ways,
 And alien lips and native with their own.
 But when white age and venerable death
 Mow down the strength and life within
 their limbs,
 Drain out the blood and darken their clear
 eyes,
 Immortal honor is on them, having past
 Through splendid life and death desirable
 To the clear seat and remote throne of
 souls,
 Lands indiscoverable in the unheard-of
 west,
 Round which the strong stream of a sacred
 sea
 Rolls without wind forever, and the snow
 There shows not her white wings and windy
 feet,
 Nor thunder nor swift rain saith anything,
 Nor the sun burns, but all things rest and
 thrive ;
 And these, filled full of days, divine and
 dead,
 Sages and singers fiery from the god,
 And such as loved their land and all things
 good
 And, best beloved of best men, liberty,
 Free lives and lips, free hands of men free-
 born,
 And whatsoever on earth was honorable
 And whatsoever of all the ephemeral seed,
 Live there a life no liker to the gods
 But nearer than their life of terrene days.
 Love thou such life and look for such a
 death.
 But from the light and fiery dreams of love
 Spring heavy sorrows and a sleepless life,
 Visions not dreams, whose lids no charm
 shall close
 Nor song assuage them walking ; and swift
 death
 Crushes with sterile feet the unripening
 ear,
 Treads out the timeless vintage ; whom do
 thou

Eschewing embrace the luck of this thy
 life,
 Not without honor; and it shall bear to
 thee
 Such fruit as men reap from spent hours
 and wear.
 Few men, but happy; of whom be thou, O
 son,
 Happiest, if thou submit thy soul to fate,
 And set thine eyes and heart on hopes
 high-born
 And divine deeds and abstinence divine.
 So shalt thou be toward all men all thy
 days
 As light and might communicable, and
 burn
 From heaven among the stars above the
 hours,
 And break not as a man breaks nor burn
 down:
 For to whom other of all heroic names
 Have the gods given his life in hand as
 thine?
 And gloriously hast thou lived, and made
 thy life
 To me that bare thee and to all men born
 Thankworthy, a praise forever; and hast
 won fame
 When wild wars broke all round thy
 father's house,
 And the mad people of windy mountain
 ways
 Laid spears against us like a sea, and all
 Ætolia thundered with Thessalian hoofs;
 Yet these, as wind battles the foam, and
 beats
 Straight back the relaxed ripple, didst thou
 break
 And loosen all their lances, till undone
 And man from man they fell; for ye twain
 stood
 God against god, Ares and Artemis,
 And thou the mightier; wherefore she un-
 leashed
 A sharp-toothed curse thou too shalt over-
 come;
 For in the greener blossom of thy life
 Ere the full blade caught flower, and when
 time gave
 Respite, thou didst not slacken soul nor
 sleep,
 But with great hand and heart seek praise
 of men
 Out of sharp straits and many a grievous
 thing,

Seeing the strange foam of undivided seas
 On channels never sailed in, and by shores
 Where the old winds cease not blowing,
 and all the night
 Thunders, and day is no delight to men.

CHORUS.

Meleager, a noble wisdom and fair words
 The gods have given this woman; hear
 thou these.

MELEAGER.

O mother, I am not fain to strive in speech
 Nor set my mouth against thee, who art
 wise
 Even as they say and full of sacred words.
 But one thing I know surely, and cleave to
 this;
 That though I be not subtle of wit as thou
 Nor womanlike to weave sweet words, and
 melt
 Mutable minds of wise men as with fire,
 I too, doing justly and reverencing the
 gods,
 Shall not want wit to see what things be
 right.
 For whom they love and whom reject,
 being gods,
 There is no man but seeth, and in good
 time
 Submits himself, refraining all his heart.
 And I too as thou sayest have seen great
 things;
 Seen elsewhere, but chiefly when the sail
 First caught between stretched ropes the
 roaring west,
 And all our oars smote eastward, and the
 wind
 First flung round faces of seafaring men
 White splendid snow-flakes of the sunder-
 ing foam,
 And the first furrow in virginal green sea
 Followed the plunging ploughshare of
 hewn pine,
 And closed, as when deep sleep subdues
 man's breath
 Lips close and heart subsides; and closing,
 shone
 Sunlike with many a Nereid's hair, and
 moved
 Round many a trembling mouth of doubtful
 gods,
 Risen out of sunless and sonorous gulfs
 Through waning water and into shallow
 light,

That watched us; and when flying the dove
 was snared
 As with men's hands, but we shot after and
 sped
 Clear through the irreameable Symplegades;
 And chiefest when hoar beach and herb-
 less cliff
 Stood out ahead from Colchis, and we
 heard
 Clefts hoarse with wind, and saw through
 narrowing reefs
 The lightning of the intolerable wave
 Flash, and the white wet flume of breakers
 burn
 Far under a kindling south-wind, as a
 lamp
 Burns and bends all its blowing flame one
 way;
 Wild heights untravelled of the wind, and
 vales
 Cloven seaward by then violent streams,
 and white
 With bitter flowers and bright salt scurf
 of brine;
 Heard sweep their sharp swift gales, and
 bowing birdwise
 Shriek with birds' voices, and with furious
 feet
 Tread loose the long skirts of a storm; and
 saw
 The whole white Euxine clash together
 and fall
 Full-mouthed, and thunderous from a
 thousand throats:
 Yet we drew thither and won the fleece and
 won
 Medea, deadlier than the sea; but there
 Seeing many a wonder and fearful things
 to men
 I saw not one thing like this one seen
 here,
 Most fair and fearful, feminine, a god,
 Faultless; whom I that love not, being
 unlike,
 Fear, and give honor, and choose from all
 the gods.

CENEUS.

Lady, the daughter of Thestius, and thou,
 son,
 Not ignorant of your strife nor light of
 wit,
 Scared with vain dreams and fluttering like
 spent fire,
 I come to judge between you, but a king

Full of past days and wise from years en-
 dured.
 Nor thee I praise who art fain to undo
 things done;
 Nor thee, who art swift to esteem them
 overmuch.
 For what the hours have given is given,
 and this
 Changeless; howbeit these change, and in
 good time
 Devise new things and good, not one thing
 still.
 Us have they sent now at our need for
 help
 Among men armed a woman, foreign
 born,
 Virgin, not like the natural flower of
 things
 That grows and bears and brings forth
 fruit and dies;
 Unlovable, no light for a husband's house,
 Espoused; a glory among unwedded girls,
 And chosen of gods who reverence maiden-
 hood.
 These too we honor in honoring her; but
 thou,
 Abstain thy feet from following, and thine
 eyes
 From amorous touch; nor set toward hers
 thine heart.
 Son, lest hate bear no deadlier fruit than
 love.

ALTHÆA.

O king, thou art wise, but wisdom halts;
 and just,
 But the gods love not justice more than
 fate,
 And smite the righteous and the violent
 mouth,
 And mix with insolent blood the reverent
 man's,
 And bruise the holier as the lying lips.
 Enough; for wise words fail me, and my
 heart
 Takes fire and trembles flamewise, O my
 son,
 O child, for thine head's sake; mine eyes
 wax thick,
 Turning toward thee, so goodly a weaponed
 man,
 So glorious; and for love of thine own
 eyes
 They are darkened, and tears burn them,
 fierce as fire,

And my lips pause and my soul sinks with
 love.
 But by thine hand, by thy sweet life and
 eyes,
 By thy great heart and these clasped knees,
 O son,
 I pray thee that thou slay me not with
 thee.
 For there was never a mother woman-
 born
 Loved her sons better; and never a queen
 of men
 More perfect in her heart toward whom
 she loved.
 For what lies light on many and they forget,
 Small things and transitory as a wind o'
 the sea,
 I forget never; I have seen thee all thine
 years
 A man in arms, strong and a joy to men
 Seeing thine head glitter and thine hand
 burn its way
 Through a heavy and iron furrow of sun-
 dering spears;
 But always also a flower of three suns old,
 The small one thing that lying drew down
 my life
 To lie with thee and feed thee; a child and
 weak,
 Mine, a delight to no man, sweet to me.
 Who then sought to thee? who gat help?
 who knew
 If thou wert goodly? nay, no man at all.
 Or what sea saw thee, or sounded with
 thine oar,
 Child? or what strange land shone with
 war through thee?
 But fair for me thou wert, O little life,
 Fruitless, the fruit of mine own flesh, and
 blind,
 More than much gold, ungrown, a foolish
 flower.
 For silver nor bright snow nor feather of
 foam
 Was whiter, and no gold yellower than
 thine hair,
 O child, my child; and now thou art
 lordlier grown,
 Not lovelier, nor a new thing in mine eyes,
 I charge thee by thy soul and this my
 breast,
 Fear thou the gods and me and thine own
 heart,
 Lest all these turn against thee; for who
 knows

What wind upon what wave of altering
 time
 Shall speak a storm and blow calamity?
 And there is nothing stable in the world
 But the gods break it; yet not less, fair
 son,
 If but one thing be stronger, if one endure,
 Surely the bitter and the rooted love
 That burns between us, going from me to
 thee,
 Shall more endure than all things. What
 dost thou,
 Following strange loves? why wilt thou
 kill mine heart?
 Lo, I talk wild and windy words, and fall
 From my clear wits, and seem of mine own
 self
 Dethroned, dispraised, disseated; and my
 mind,
 That was my crown, breaks, and mine
 heart is gone,
 And I am naked of my soul, and stand
 Ashamed, as a mean woman; take thou
 thought:
 Live if thou wilt, and if thou wilt not,
 look,
 The gods have given thee life to lose or
 keep,
 Thou shalt not die as men die, but thine
 end
 Fallen upon thee shall break me unaware.

MELEAGER.

Queen, my whole heart is molten with thy
 tears,
 And my limbs yearn with pity of thee, and
 love
 Compels with grief mine eyes and laboring
 breath:
 For what thou art I know thee, and this
 thy breast
 And thy fair eyes I worship, and am bound
 Toward thee in spirit and love thee in all
 my soul.
 For there is nothing terrible to men
 Than the sweet face of mothers, and the
 might.
 But what shall be let be; for us the day
 Once only lives a little, and is not found.
 Time and the fruitful hour are more than
 we,
 And these lay hold upon us; but thou,
 God,
 Zeus, the sole steersman of the helm of
 things,

Father, be swift to see us, and as thou wilt
Help: or if adverse, as thou wilt, refrain.

CHORUS.

We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair;
thou art goodly, O Love;
Thy wings make light in the air as the
wings of a dove.
Thy feet are as winds that divide the
stream of the sea;
Earth is thy covering to hide thee, the gar-
ment of thee.
Thou art swift and subtle and blind as a
flame of fire;
Before thee the laughter, behind thee the
tears of desire;
And twain go forth beside thee, a man with
a maid;
Her eyes are the eyes of a bride whom de-
light makes afraid;
As the breath in the buds that stir is her
bridal breath:
But Fate is the name of her: and his name
is Death.

For an evil blossom was born
Of sea-foam and the frothing of blood,
Blood-red and bitter of fruit,
And the seed of it laughter and
tears,
And the leaves of it madness and scorn;
A bitter flower from the bud,
Sprung of the sea without root,
Sprung without graft from the years.

The web of the world was untern
That is woven of the day on the night,
The hair of the hours was not white
Nor the raiment of time over-worn,
When a wonder, a world's delight,
A perilous goddess was born;
And the waves of the sea as she came
Clove, and the foam at her feet,
Fawning, rejoiced to bring forth
A fleshly blossom, a flame
Filling the heavens with heat
To the cold white ends of the north.
And in air the clamorous birds,
And men upon earth that hear
Sweet articulate words
Sweetly divided apart,
And in shallow channel and mere
The rapid and footless herds,
Rejoiced, being foolish of heart.

For all they said upon earth,
She is fair, she is white like a dove,
And the life of the world in her breast
Breathes, and is born at her birth;
For they knew thee for mother of love,
And knew thee not mother of death.

What hadst thou to do being born,
Mother, when winds were at ease,
As a flower of the springtime of corn,
A flower of the foam of the seas?
For bitter thou wast from thy birth.
Aphrodite, a mother of strife;
For before thee some rest was on earth,
A little respite from tears,
A little pleasure of life;
For life was not then as thou art,
But as one that waxeth in years
Sweet-spoken, a fruitful wife;
Earth had no thorn, and desire
No sting, neither death any dart;
What hadst thou to do among these,
Thou, clothed with a burning fire,
Thou, girt with sorrow of heart,
Thou, sprung of the seed of the seas
As an ear from a seed of corn,
As a brand plucked forth of a pyre,
As a ray shed forth of the morn,
For division of soul and disease,
For a dart and a sting and a thorn?
What ailed thee then to be born?
Was there not evil enough,
Mother, and anguish on earth
Born with a man at his birth,
Wastes underfoot, and above
Storm out of heaven, and dearth
Shaken down from the shining thereof
Wrecks from afar overseas
And peril of shallow and firth,
And tears that spring and increase
In the barren places of mirth,
That thou, having wings as a dove,
Being girt with desire for a girth,
That thou must come after these.
That thou must lay on him love?

Thou shouldst not so have been born:
But death should have risen with thee,
Mother, and visible fear,
Grief, and the wringing of hands,
And noise of many that mourn;
The smitten bosom, the knee
Bowed, and in each man's ear
A cry as of perishing lands,
A moan as of people in prison,

A tumult of infinite griefs;
 And thunder of storm on the sands,
 And wailing of wives on the shore;
 And under thee newly arisen,
 Loud shoals and shipwrecking reefs,
 Fierce air and violent light:
 Sail rent and sundering oar,
 Darkness and noises of night;
 Clashing of streams in the sea,
 Wave against wave as a sword,
 Clamor of currents, and foam;
 Rains making ruin on earth,
 Winds that wax ravenous and roam
 As wolves in a wolfish horde;
 Fruits growing faint in the tree,
 And blind things dead in their birth;
 Famine, and blighting of corn,
 When thy time was come to be born.

All these we know of; but thee
 Who shall discern or declare?
 In the uttermost ends of the sea
 The light of thine eyelids and hair,
 The light of thy bosom as fire
 Between the wheel of the sun
 And the flying flames of the air?
 Wilt thou turn thee not yet nor have pity,
 But abide with despair and desire
 And the crying of armies undone,
 Lamentation of one with another,
 And breaking of city by city;
 The dividing of friend against friend,
 The severing of brother and brother;
 Wilt thou utterly bring to an end?
 Have mercy, mother!

For against all men from of old
 Thou hast set thine hand as a curse,
 And cast out gods from their places.
 These things are spoken of thee.
 Strong kings and goodly with gold
 Thou hast found out arrows to pierce,
 And made their kingdoms and races
 As dust and surf of the sea.
 All these, overburdened with woes
 And with length of their days waxen
 weak,
 Thou slewest; and sentest moreover
 Upon Tyro an evil thing.
 Rent hair and a fetter and blows
 Making bloody the flower of the cheek,
 Though she lay by a god as a lover,
 Though fair, and the seed of a king.
 For of old, being full of thy fire,

She endured not longer to wear
 On her bosom a saffron vest,
 On her shoulder an ashwood quiver;
 Being mixed and made one through desire.
 With Enipeus and all her hair
 Made moist with his mouth, and her
 breast
 Filled full of the foam of the river.

ATALANTA.

Sun, and clear light among green hills, and
 day
 Late risen and long sought after, and you
 just gods
 Whose hands divide anguish and recom-
 pense,
 But first the sun's white sister, a maid in
 heaven,
 On earth of all maids worshipped,—hail,
 and hear,
 And witness with me if not without sign
 sent,
 Not without rule and reverence, I a maid
 Hallowed, and huntress holy as whom I
 serve,
 Here in your sight and eyeshot of these
 men
 Stand, girt as they toward hunting, and my
 shafts
 Drawn; wherefore all ye stand up on my
 side,
 If I be pure and all ye righteous gods,
 Lest one revile me, a woman, yet no wife,
 That bear a spear for spindle, and this
 bow strung
 For a web woven: and with pure lips
 salute
 Heaven, and the face of all the gods, and
 dawn
 Filling with maiden flames and maiden
 flowers
 The starless fold o' the stars, and making
 sweet
 The warm wan heights of the air, moon-
 trodden ways
 And breathless gates and extreme hills of
 heaven.
 Whom, having offered water and bloodless
 gifts,
 Flowers, and a golden circlet of pure hair,
 Next Artemis I bid be favorable
 And make this day all golden, hers and
 ours,
 Gracious and good and white to the un-
 blamed end.

But thou, O well-beloved, of all my days
Bid it be fruitful, and a crown for all,
To bring forth leaves and bind round all
my hair
With perfect chaplets woven for thine of
thee.

For not without the word of thy chaste
mouth,
For not without law given and clean com-
mand,

Across the white straits of the running sea
From Elis even to the Acheloian horn
I with clear winds came hither and gentle
gods,

Far off my father's house, and left un-
cheered

Iasius, and uncheered the Arcadian hills
And all their green-haired waters, and all
woods

Disconsolate to hear no horn of mine
Blown, and behold no flash of swift white
feet.

MELEAGER.

For thy name's sake and awe toward thy
chaste head,

O holiest Atalanta, no man dares
Praise thee, though fairer than whom all
men praise,

And godlike for thy grace of hallowed
hair

And holy habit of thine eyes and feet
That make the blown foam neither swift
nor white

Though the wind winnow and whirl it; yet
we praise

Gods, found because of thee adorable
And for thy sake praiseworthyest from all
men:

Thee therefore we praise also, thee as
these,

Pure, and light lit at the hands of gods.

TOXEUS.

How long will ye whet spears with elo-
quence,

Fight and kill beasts dry-handed with
sweet words?

Cease, or talk still and slay thy boars at
home.

PLEXIPPUS.

Why, if she ride among us for a man,
Sit thou for her and spin; a man grown
girl

Is worth a woman weaponed; sit thou
here

MELEAGER.

Peace, and be wise; no gods love idle
speech

PLEXIPPUS.

Nor any man a man's mouth woman-
tongued.

MELEAGER.

For my lips bite not sharper than mine
hands.

PLEXIPPUS.

Nay, both bite soft, but no whit softly
mine.

MELEAGER.

Keep thine hands clean; they have time
enough to stain.

PLEXIPPUS.

For thine shall rest and wax not red to-
day.

MELEAGER.

Have all thy will of words; talk out thine
heart.

ALTHÆA.

Refrain your lips, O brethren, and my
son,

Lest words turn snakes and bite you utter-
ing them.

TOXEUS.

Except she give her blood before the gods,
What profit shall a maid be among men?

PLEXIPPUS.

Let her come crowned and stretch nei-
throat for a knife,

Bleat out her spirit and die, and so shall
men

Through her too prosper and through
prosperous gods;

But nowise through her living; shall she
live

A flower-bud of the flower bed, or sweet
fruit

For kisses and the honey-making mouth,
And play the shield for strong men and the
spear?

Then shall the heifer and her mate lock
horns,

And the bride overbear the groom, and men
 Gods; for no less division sunders these;
 Since all things made are seasonable in time,
 But if one alter unseasonable are all.
 But thou, O Zeus, hear me that I may slay
 This beast before thee and no man halve with me
 Nor woman, lest these mock thee, though a god,
 Who hast made men strong, and thou being wise be held
 Foolish; for wise is that thing which endures.

ATLANTA.

Men, and the chosen of all this people, and thou,
 King, I beseech you a little bear with me.
 For if my life be shameful that I live,
 Let the gods witness and their wrath; but these
 Cast no such word against me. Thou, O mine,
 O holy, O happy goddess, if I sin
 Changing the words of women and the works
 For spears and strange men's faces, hast not thou
 One shaft of all thy sudden seven that pierced
 Seven through the bosom or shining throat or side,
 All couched about one mothers' loosening knees,
 All holy born, engrafted of Tantalus?
 But if toward any of you I am overhold
 That take thus much upon me, let him think
 How I, for all my forest holiness,
 Fame, and this armed and iron maidenhood,
 Pay thus much also; I shall have no man's love
 Forever, and no face of children born
 Or feeding lips upon me or fastening eyes
 Forever, nor being dead shall kings my sons
 Mourn me and bury, and tears on daughter's cheeks
 Burn; but a cold and sacred life, but strange,

But far from dances and the back-blowing torch,
 Far off from flowers or any bed of man
 Shall my life be forever: me the snows
 That face the first o' the morning, and cold hills
 Full of the land-wind and sea-travelling storms
 And many a wandering wing of noisy nights
 That know the thunder and bear the thickening wolves—
 Me the utmost pine and footless frost of woods
 That talk with many winds and gods, the hours
 Re-risen, and white divisions of the dawn,
 Springs thousand-tongued with the intermitting reed
 And streams that murmur of the mother snow—
 Me these allure, and know me; but no man
 Knows, and my goddess only. Lo now, see,
 If one of all you these things vex at all.
 Would God that any of you had all the praise
 And I no manner of memory when I die,
 So might I show before her perfect eyes
 Pure, whom I follow, a maiden to my death.
 But for the rest let all have all they will;
 For is it a grief to you that I have part,
 Being woman merely, in your male might and deeds
 Done by main strength? yet in my body is throned
 As great a heart, and in my spirit, O men,
 I have not less of godlike. Evil it were
 That one a coward should mix with you, one hand
 Fearful, one eye abase itself; and these
 Well might ye hate and well revile, not me.
 For not the difference of the several flesh
 Being vile or noble or beautiful or base
 Makes praiseworthy, but purer spirit and heart
 Higher than these meaner mouths and limbs, that feed,
 Rise, rest, and are and are not; and for me,
 What should I say? but by the gods of the world

And this my maiden body, by all oaths
That bind the tongue of men and the evil
will,
I am not mighty-minded, nor desire
Crowns, nor the spoil of slain things nor
the fame;
Feed ye on these, eat and wax fat; cry
out,
Laugh, having eaten, and leap without a
lyre
Sing, mix the wind with clamor, smite and
shake
Sonus timbrels and tumultuous hail,
And fill the dance up with tempestuous
feet,
For I will none; but having prayed my
prayers
And made thank-offering for prosperities,
I shall go hence and no man see me more.
What thing is this for you to shout me
down,
What, for a man to grudge me this my
life
As it were envious of all yours, and I
A thief of reputations? nay, for now,
If there be any highest in heaven, a god
Above all thrones and thunders of the
gods
Throned, and the wheel of the world roll
under him,
Judge he between me and all of you, and
see
If I transgress at all: but ye, refrain
Transgressing hands and reinless mouths,
and keep
Silence, less by much foam of violent words
And proper poison of your lips ye die.

CENEUS.

O flower of Tega, maiden, fleetest foot
And holiest head of women, have good
cheer
Of thy good words: but ye, depart with
her
In peace and reverence, each with blame-
less eye
Following his fate; exalt your hands and
hearts,
Strike, cease not, arrow on arrow and
wound on wound,
And go with gods and with the gods
return.

CHORUS.

Who hath given man speech? or who hath
set therein

A thorn for peril and a snare for sin?
For in the word his life is and his breath,
And in the word his death,
That madness and the insafuate heart may
breed
From the word's womb the deed
And life bring one thing forth ere all pass
by,
Even one thing which is ours yet cannot
die—
Death. Hast thou seen him ever any-
where,
Time's twin-born brother, imperishable as
he
Is perishable and plaintive, clothed with
care
And mutable as sand,
But death is strong and full of blood and
fair
And perdurable and like a lord of land?
Nay, time thou seest not, death thou wilt
not see
Till life's right hand be loosened from
thine hand
And thy life-days from thee.
For the gods very subtly fashion
Madness with sadness upon earth:
Not knowing in anywise compassion,
Nor holding pity of any worth;
And many things they have given and
taken,
And wrought and ruined many things;
The firm land have they loosed and
shaken,
And sealed the sea with all her springs;
They have wearied time with heavy burdens
And vexed the lips of life with breath:
Set men to labor and given them guerdons,
Death and great darkness after death:
Put moans into the bridal measure
And on the bridal wools a stain:
And circled pain about with pleasure,
And girdled pleasure about with pain;
And strewed one marriage-bed with tears
and fire
For extreme loathing and supreme desire.

What shall be done with all these tears of
ours?
Shall they make watersprings in the
fair heaven
To bathe the brows of morning? or like
flowers
Be shed and shine before the starriest
hours,

Or made the raiment of the weeping
Seven?

Or rather, O our masters, shall they be
Food for the famine of the grievous sea,

A great well-head of lamentation
Satiating the sad gods? or fall and flow
Among the years and seasons to and fro,
And wash their feet with tribulation
And fill them full with grieving ere they
go?

Alas, our lords, and yet alas again,
Seeing all your iron heaven is gilt as gold
But all we smite thereat in vain;
Smite the gates barred with groanings
manifold,

But all the floors are paved with our
pain.

Yea, and with the weariness of lips and
eyes,

With breaking of the bosom, and with
sighs,

We labor, and are clad and fed with
grief

And filled with days we would not fain
behold

And nights we would not hear of; we wax
old,

All we wax old and wither like a leaf.
We are outcast, strayed between bright sun
and moon;

Our light and darkness are as leaves of
flowers,

Black flowers and white, that perish; and
the noon

As midnight, and the night as daylight
hours.

A little fruit a little while is ours
And the worm finds it soon.

But up in heaven the high gods one by one
Lay hands upon the draught that quick-
eneth,

Fulfilled with all tears shed and all things
done,

And stir with soft imperishable breath
The bubbling bitterness of life and
death,

And hold it to our lips and laugh; but
they

Preserve their lips from tasting night or
day,

Lest they too change and sleep, the fates
that spun,

The lips that made us and the hands that
slay;

Lest all these change, and heaven bow
down to none,

Change and be subject to the secular sway
And terrene revolution of the sun.

Therefore they thrust it from them, putting
time away.

I would the wine of time, made sharp and
sweet

With multitudinous days and nights and
tears

And many mixing savors of strange
years,

Were no more trodden of them under feet,
Cast out and spilt about their holy
places:

That life were given them as a fruit to
eat

And death to drink as water; that the
light

Might ebb, drawn backward from their
eyes, and night

Hide for one hour the imperishable
faces,

That they might rise up sad in heaven,
and know

Sorrow and sleep, one paler than young
snow,

One cold as blight of dew and ruinous
rain;

Rise up and rest and suffer a little, and
be

Awhile as all things born with us, and
we,

And grieve as men, and like slain men
be slain.

For now we know not of them; but one
saith

The gods are gracious, praising God;
and one,

When hast thou seen? or hast thou felt
his breath

Touch nor consume thy eyelids as the
sun,

Nor fill thee to the lips with fiery death?
None hath beheld him, none

Seen above other gods and shapes of
things,

Swift without feet and flying without
wings,

Intolerable, not clad with death or life,
Insatiable, not known of night or day,

The lord of love and loathing and of
strife

Who gives a star and takes a sun away;

Who shapes the soul, and makes her a barren wife

To the earthy body and grievous growth of clay ;

Who turns the large limbs to a little flame
And binds the great sea with a little sand ;

Who makes desire, and slays desire with shame ;

Who shakes the heaven as ashes in his hand ;

Who, seeing the light and shadow for the same,

Bids day waste night as fire devours a brand,

Smites without sword, and scourges without rod ;

The supreme evil, God.

Yea, with thine hate, O God, thou hast covered us,

One saith, and hidden our eyes away from sight,

And made us transitory and hazardous.

Light things and slight ;

Yet have men praised thee, saying, He hath made man thus,

And he doeth right.

Thou hast kissed us, and hath smitten ;
thou hast laid

Upon us with thy left hand life, and said,
Live: and again thou hast said, Yield up
your breath,

And with thy right hand laid upon us death.

Thou hast sent us sleep, and stricken sleep
with dreams,

Saying, Joy is not, but love of joy shall be ;

Thou hast made sweet springs for all the pleasant streams,

In the end thou hast made them bitter
with the sea.

Thou hast fed one rose with dust of many men ;

Thou hast marred one face with fire of many tears ;

Thou hast taken love, and given us sorrow again ;

With pain thou hast filled us full to the eyes and ears.

Therefore because thou art strong, our father, and we

Feeble ; and thou art against us, and thine hand

Constrains us in the shallows of the sea

And breaks us at the limits of the land ;
Because thou hast bent thy lightnings as a bow,

And loosed the hours like arrows ; and let fall

Sins and wild words and many a wingèd woe

And wars among us, and one end of all ;
Because thou hast made the thunder, and thy feet

Are as rushing water when the skies

Break, but thy face as an exceeding heat

And flames of fire the eyelids of thine eyes ;

Because thou art over all who are over us ;
Because thy name is life and our name death ;

Because thou art cruel and men are piteous,
And our hands labor and thine hand scattereth ;

Lo, with hearts rent and knees made tremulous,

Lo, with ephemeral lips and casual breath,

At least we witness of thee ere we die
That these things are not otherwise, but thus ;

That each man in his heart sigheth. and saith,

That all men even as I,

All we are against thee, against thee, O God most high.

But ye, keep ye on earth

Your lips from over-speech,

Loud words and longing are so little worth ;

And the end is hard to reach.

For silence after grievous things is good,

And reverence, and the fear that makes men whole,

And shame, and righteous governance of blood,

And lordship of the soul.

But from sharp words and wits men pluck no fruit,

And gathering thorns they shake the tree at root ;

For words divide and rend ;

But silence is most noble to the end.

ALTHÆA.

I heard within the house a cry of news

And came forth eastward hither, where the dawn

Cheers first these warder gods that face the
sun

And next our eyes unrisen ; for unaware
Came clashes of swift hoofs and trampling
feet

And through the windy pillared corridor
Light sharper than the frequent flames of
day

That daily fill it from the fiery dawn;
Gleams, and a thunder of people that cried
out,

And dust and hurrying horsemen; lo their
chief,

That rode with Ceneus rein by rein, re-
turned.

What cheer, O herald of my lord the king?

HERALD.

Lady, good cheer and great; the boar is
slain.

CHORUS.

Praised be all gods that look toward
Calydon.

ALTHÆA.

Good news and brief; but by whose hap-
pier hand?

HERALD.

A maiden's and a prophet's and thy son's.

ALTHÆA.

Well fare the spear that severed him and
life.

HERALD.

Thine own, and not an alien, hast thou
blest.

ALTHÆA.

Twice be thou too for my sake blest and
his.

HERALD.

At the king's word I rode afoam for thine.

ALTHÆA,

Thou sayest he tarrieth till they bring the
spoil?

HERALD.

Hard by the quarry, where they breathe,
O queen.

ALTHÆA.

Speak thou their chance; but some bring
flowers and crown

These gods and all the lintel, and shed
wine,
Fetch sacrifice and slay; for heaven is
good.

HERALD.

Some furlongs northward where the brakes
begin

West of that narrowing range of warrior
hills

Whose brooks have bled with battle when
thy son

Smote Acarnania, there all they made
halt,

And with keen eye took note of spear and
hound,

Royally ranked; Laertes island-born,
The young Gerenian Nestor, Panopeus,

And Cepheus and Ancæus, mightiest
thewed,

Arcadians; next, and evil-eyed of these,
Arcadian Atalanta, with twain hounds

Lengthening the leash, and under nose and
brow

Glittering with lipless tooth and fire-swift
eye;

But from her white-braced shoulder the
plumed shafts

Rang, and the bow shone from her side;
next her

Meleager; like a sun in spring that strikes
Branch into leaf and bloom into the world,

A glory among men meaner; Iphicles,
And following him that slew the biform

bull
Pirithous, and divine Eurytion,

And, bride-bound to the gods, Æacides.
Then Telamon his brother, and Argive-

born
The seer and sayer of visions and of truth,

Amphiaras; and a fourfold strength,
Thine, even thy mother's and thy sister's

sons.
And recent from the roar of foreign foam

Jason; and Dryas twin-begot with war,
A blossom of bright battle, sword and

man
Shining; and Idas, and the keenest eye

Of Lynceus, and Admetus twice-espoused,
And Hippasus and Hyleus, great in heart.

These having halted bade blow horns, and
rode

Through woods and waste lands cleft by
stormy streams,

Past yew-trees and the heavy hair of pines,

And where the dew is thickest under oaks,
This way and that; but questing up and
down
They saw no trail nor scented; and one
said,
Plexippus, Help, or help not, Artemis,
And we will flay thy boarskin with male
hands;
But saying, he ceased and said not that he
would,
Seeing where the green ooze of a sun-struck
marsh
Shook with a thousand reeds untunable,
And in their moist and multitudinous
flower
Slept no soft sleep, with violent visions
fed,
The blind bulk of the immeasurable beast.
And seeing, he shuddered with sharp lust
of praise
Through all his limbs, and launched a
double dart,
And missed; for much desire divided him,
Too hot of spirit and feebler than his will,
That his hand failed, though fervent; and
the shaft,
Sundering the rushes, in a tamarisk stem
Shook, and stuck fast; then all abode save
one,
The Arcadian Atalanta; from her side
Sprang her hounds, laboring at the leash,
and slipped,
And plashed ear-deep with plunging feet;
but she
Saying, Speed it as I send it for thy sake,
Goddess, drew bow and loosed; the sudden
string
Rang, and sprang inward, and the waterish
air
Hissed, and the moist plumes of the song-
less reeds
Moved as a wave which the wind moves
no more.
But the boar heaved half out of ooze and
slime
His tense flank trembling round the barbéd
wound,
Hateful; and fiery with invasive eyes
And bristling with intolerable hair
Plunged, and the hounds clung, and green
flowers and white
Reddened and broke all round them where
they came.
And charging with sheer tusk he drove,
and smote

Hyleus; and sharp death caught his sudden
soul,
And violent sleep shed night upon his
eyes.
Then Peleus, with strong strain of hand
and heart,
Shot; but the sidelong arrow slid, and
slew
His comrade born and loving country-
man,
Under the left arm smitten, as he no less
Poised a like arrow; and bright blood
break afoam,
And falling, and weighed back by clamor-
ous arms,
Sharp rang the dead limbs of Eurytion.
Then one shot happier, the Cadmean seer,
Amphiaræus; for his sacred shaft
Pierced the red circlet of one ravening
eye
Beneath the brute brows of the sanguine
boar,
Now bloodier from one slain; but he so
galled
Sprang straight, and rearing cried no lesser
cry
Than thunder and the roar of wintering
streams
That mix their own foam with the yellower
sea;
And as a tower that falls by fire in fight
With ruin of walls and all its archery,
And breaks the iron flower of war be-
neath,
Crushing charred limbs and molten arms
of men;
So through crushed branches and the
reddening brake
Clamored and crashed the fervor of his
feet,
And trampled, springing sideways from
the tusk,
Too tardy a moving mould of heavy
strength,
Anceus; and as flakes of weak-winged
snow
Break, all the hard thews of his heaving
limbs
Broke, and rent flesh fell every way, and
blood
Flew, and fierce fragments of no more a
man.
Then all the heroes drew sharp breath, and
gazed,
And smote not; but Meleager, but thy son,

Right in the wild way of the coming curse
 Rock-rooted, fair with fierce and fastened
 lips,
 Clear eyes, and springing muscle and
 shortening limb—
 With chin aslant indrawn to a tightening
 throat,
 Grave, and with gathered sinews, like a
 god,—
 Aimed on the left side his well-handled
 spear
 Grasped where the ash was knottiest hewn,
 and smote,
 And with no missile wound, the monstrous
 boar
 Right in the hairiest hollow of his hide
 Under the last rib, sheer through bulk and
 bone,
 Deep in; and deeply smitten, and to death,
 The heavy horror with his hanging shafts
 Leapt, and fell furiously, and from raging
 lips
 Foamed out the latest wrath of all his life.
 And all they praised the gods with mightier
 heart,
 Zeus and all gods, but chiefliest Artemis,
 Seeing; but Meleager bade whet knives and
 flay,
 Strip and stretch out the splendor of the
 spoil;
 And hot and horrid from the work all
 these
 Sat, and drew breath and drank and made
 great cheer
 And washed the hard sweat off their calmer
 brows.
 For much sweet grass grew higher than
 grew the reed,
 And good for slumber, and every holier
 herb,
 Narcissus, and the low-lying melilote,
 And all of goodliest blade and bloom that
 springs
 Where, hid by heavier hyacinth, violet
 buds
 Blossom and burn; and fire of yellower
 flowers
 And light of crescent lilies, and such leaves
 As fear the Faun's and know the Dryad's
 foot;
 Olive and ivy and poplar dedicate,
 And many a wellspring overwatched of
 these.
 There now they rest; but me the king bade
 bear

Good tidings to rejoice this town and thee.
 Wherefore be glad, and all ye give much
 thanks
 For fallen is all the trouble of Calydon.

ALTHÆA.

Laud ye the gods; for this they have given
 is good
 And what shall be they hide until their
 time.
 Much good and somewhat grievous hast
 thou said,
 And either well; but let all sad things be,
 Till all have made before the prosperous
 gods
 Burnt-offering, and poured out the floral
 wine.
 Look fair, O gods, and favorable; for we
 Praise you with no false heart or flattering
 mouth
 Being merciful, but with pure souls and
 prayer.

HERALD.

Thou hast prayed well; for whoso fears
 not these,
 But once being prosperous waxes huge of
 heart,
 Him shall some new thing unaware de-
 stroy.

CHORUS.

O that I now, I too were
 By deep wells and water-floods,
 Streams of ancient hills, and where
 All the wan green places bear
 Blossoms cleaving to the sod,
 Fruitless fruit, and grasses fair
 Or such darkest ivy-buds
 As divide thy yellow hair,
 Bacchus, and their leaves that nod
 Round thy fawnskin brush the bare
 Snow-soft shoulders of a god;
 There the year is sweet, and there
 Earth is full of secret springs,
 And the fervent rose-checked hours,
 Those that marry dawn and noon,
 There are sunless, there look pale
 In dim leaves and hidden air,
 Pale as grass or latter flowers
 Or the wild vine's wan wet rings
 Full of dew beneath the moon,
 And all day the nightingale
 Sleeps, and all night sings;
 There in cold remote recesses

That nor alien eye assail,
Feet, nor imminence of wings.
Nor a wind nor any tune,
Thou, O queen and holiest,
Flower the whitest of all things,
With reluctant lengthening tresses
And with sudden splendid breast
Save of maidens un beholden,
There are wont to enter, there
Thy divine sweet limbs and golden
Maiden growth of unbound hair,
Bathed in waters white,
Shine, and many a maid's by thee
In moist woodland or the hilly
Flowerless brakes where wells abound
Out of all men's sight;
Or in lower pools that see
All their marges clothed all round
With the innumerable lily,
Whence the golden-girdled bee
Flits through flowering rush to fret
White or dusky violet,
Fair as those that in far years
With their buds left luminous
And their little leaves made wet
From the warmer dew of tears,
Mother's tears in extreme need,
Hid the limbs of Iamus,
Of thy brother's seed;
For his heart was piteous
Toward him, even as thine heart now
Pitiful toward us;
Thine, O goddess, turning hither
A benignant blameless brow;
Seeing enough of evil done
And lives withered as leaves wither
In the blasting of the sun;
Seeing enough of hunters dead,
Ruin enough of all our year,
Herds and harvests slain and shed
Herdsmen stricken many an one,
Fruits and flocks consumed together,
And great length of deadly days.
Yet with reverent lips and fear
Turn we toward thee, turn and praise
For this lightening of clear weather
And prosperities begun.
For not seldom, when all air
As bright water without breath
Shines, and when men fear not, fate
Without thunder unaware
Breaks, and brings down death.
Joy with grief ye great gods give,
Good with bad, and overbear
All the pride of us that live,

All the high estate,
As ye long since overbore,
As in old time long before,
Many a strong man and a great,
All that were.
But do thou, sweet, otherwise,
Having heel of all our prayer,
Taking note of all our sighs;
We beseech thee by thy light,
By thy bow, and thy sweet eyes,
And the kingdom of the night,
Be thou favorable and fair;
By thine arrows and thy might
And Orion overthrown;
By the maiden thy delight,
By the indissoluble zone
And the sacred hair.

MESSENGER.

Maidens, if ye will sing now, shift your
song,
Bow down, cry, wail for pity; is this a
time
For singing? nay, for strewing of dust and
ash,
Rent raiment, and for bruising of the
breast.

CHORUS.

What new thing wolf-like lurks behind thy
words?
What snake's tongue in thy lips? what fire
in the eyes?

MESSENGER.

Bring me before the queen and I will
speak.

CHORUS.

Lo, she comes forth as from thank-offering
made.

MESSENGER.

A barren offering for a bitter gift

ALTHÆA.

What are these borne on branches, and the
face
Covered? no mean men living, but now
slain
Such honor have they, if any dwell with
death.

MESSENGER.

Queen, thy twain brethren and thy mother's
sons.

ALTHÆA.

Lay down your dead till I behold their blood
If it be mine indeed, and I will weep.

MESSENGER.

Weep if thou wilt, for these men shall no more.

ALTHÆA.

O brethren, O my father's sons, of me
Well loved and well reputed, I should weep
Tears dearer than the dear blood drawn from you
But that I know you not uncomforted,
Sleeping no shameful sleep, however slain,
For my son surely hath avenged you dead.

MESSENGER.

Nay, should thine own seed slay himself,
O queen ?

ALTHÆA.

Thy double word brings forth a double death.

MESSENGER.

Know this then singly, by one hand they fell.

ALTHÆA.

What mutterest thou with thine ambiguous mouth ?

MESSENGER.

Slain by thy son's hand; is that saying so hard ?

ALTHÆA.

Our time is come upon us: it is here.

CHORUS.

O miserable, and spoiled at thine own hand.

ALTHÆA.

Wert thou not called Meleager from this womb ?

CHORUS.

A grievous huntsman hath it bred to thee.

ALTHÆA.

Wert thou born fire, and shalt thou not devour ?

CHORUS.

The fire thou madest, will it consume even thee ?

ALTHÆA.

My dreams are fallen upon me; burn thou too.

CHORUS.

Not without God are visions born and die.

ALTHÆA.

The gods are many about me; I am one.

CHORUS.

She groans as men wrestling with heavier gods.

ALTHÆA.

They rend me, they divide me, they destroy.

CHORUS.

Or one laboring in travail of strange births.

ALTHÆA.

They are strong, they are strong; I am broken, and these prevail.

CHORUS.

The god is great against her; she will die.

ALTHÆA.

Yea, but not now; for my heart too is great.

I would I were not here in sight of the sun.
But thou, speak all thou sawest, and I will die.

MESSENGER.

O queen, for queenlike hast thou borne thyself,

A little word may hold so great mischance.
For in division of the sanguine spoil
These men thy brethren wrangling bade yield up

The boar's head and the horror of the hide,
That this might stand a wonder in Calydon,

Hallowed; and some drew toward them ;
but thy son,

With great hands grasping all that weight of hair,

Cast down the dead heap clanging and collapsed

At female feet, saying, This thy spoil, not mine,

Maiden, thine own hand for thyself hath reaped,

And all this praise God gives thee: she
thereat
Laughed, as when dawn touches the sacred
night
The sky sees laugh and redden and divide
Dim lips and eyelids virgin of the sun,
Hers, and the warm slow breasts of morn-
ing heave,
Fruitful, and flushed with flame from lamp-
lit hours,
And maiden undulation of clear hair
Color the clouds; so laughed she from pure
heart
Lit with a low blush to the braided hair,
And rose-colored and cold like very dawn,
Golden and godlike, chastely with chaste
lips
A faint, grave laugh; and all they held
their peace,
And she passed by them. Then one cried,
Lo now,
Shall not the Arcadian shoot out lips
at us,
Saying all we were despoiled by this one
girl?
And all they rode against her violently
And cast the fresh crown from her hair,
and now
They had rent her spoil away, dishonoring
her,
Save that Meleager, as a tame lion chafed,
Bore on them, broke them, as fire cleaves
wood
So clove and drove them, smitten in twain;
but she
Smote not nor heaved up hand; and this
man first,
Plexippus, crying out, this for Love's sake,
sweet,
Drove at Meleager, who with spear
straightening
Pierced his cheek through; then Toxeus
made for him,
Dumb, but his spear spake; vain and vio-
lent words,
Fruitless; for him too, stricken through
both sides,
The earth felt falling, and his horse's
foam
Blanched thy son's face, his slayer; and
these being slain,
None moved nor spake; but Ceneus bade
bear hence
These made of heaven infatuate in their
deaths,

Foolish; for these would baffle fate, and
fell,
And they passed on, and all men honored
her,
Being honorable, as one revered of heaven.

ALTHÆA.

What say ye, Women? is all this not well
done?

CHORUS.

No man doth well but God hath part in
him.

ALTHÆA.

But no part here; for these my brethren
born

Ye have no part in, these ye know not of
As I that was their sister, a sacrifice
Slain in their slaying. I would I had died
for these;

For this man dead walked with me, child
by child,

And made a weak staff for my feeble feet
With his own tender wrist and hand, and
held

And led me softly, and showed me gold
and steel

And shining shapes of mirror and bright
crown

And all things fair; and threw light spears,
and brought

Young hounds to huddle at my feet and
thrust

Tame heads against my little maiden
breasts,

And please me with great eyes; and those
days went,

And these are bitter, and I a barren
queen

And sister miserable, a grievous thing
And mother of many curses; and she
too,

My sister Leda, sitting overseas
With fair fruits round her, and her faultless
lord,

Shall curse me, saying, A sorrow and not
a son,

Sister, thou barest, even a burning fire
A brand consuming thine own soul and
me.

But ye now, sons of Thestius, make good
cheer,

For ye shall have such wood to funeral
fire

As no king hath; and flame that once burnt
down
Oil shall not quicken or breath relume or
wine
Refresh again; much costlier than fine
gold,
And more than many lives of wandering
men.

CHORUS.

O queen, thou hast yet with thee love-
worthy things,
Thine husband, and the great strength of
thy son.

ALTHÆA

Who shall get brothers for me while I
live?
Who bear them? who bring forth in lieu
of these?
Are not our fathers and our brethren one,
And no man like them? are not mine here
slain?
Have we not hung together, he and I,
Flowerwise feeding as the feeding bees,
With mother-milk for honey? and this
man too,
Dead, with my son's spear thrust between
his sides,
Hath he not seen us, later born than he,
Laugh with lips filled, and laughed again
for love?
There were no sons then in the world, nor
spears,
Nor deadly births of women; but the
gods
Allowed us, and our days were clear of
these.
I would I had died unwedded, and brought
forth
No swords to vex the world; for these that
spake
Sweet words long since and loved me will
not speak
Nor love nor look upon men; and all my
life
I shall not hear nor see them living men.
But I too living, how shall I now live?
What life shall this be with my son, to
know
What hath been and desire what will not
be,
Look for dead eyes and listen for dead
lips,
And kill mine own heart with remembering
them,

And with those eyes that see the slayer
alive
Weep, and wring hands that clasp him by
the hand?
How shall I bear my dreams of them, to
hear
False voices, feel the kisses of false
mouths
And footless sound of perished feet, and
then
Wake and hear only it may be their own
hounds
Whine masterless in miserable sleep,
And see their boar spears and their beds
and seats
And all the gear and housings of their
lives
And not the men? shall hounds and horses
mourn,
Pine with strange eyes, and prick up hun-
gry ears,
Famish and fail at heart for their dear
lords,
And I not heed at all? and those blind
things
Fall off from life for love's sake, and I
live?
Surely some death is better than some
life,
Better one death for him and these and
me.
For if the gods had slain them it may be
I had endured it; if they had fallen by
war
Or by the nets and knives of privy death
And by hired hands while sleeping, this
thing too
I had set my soul to suffer; or this hunt,
Had this despatched them, under tusk or
tooth,
Torn, sanguine, trodden, broken; for all
deaths
Or honorable or with facile feet avenged
And hands of swift gods following, all save
this,
Are bearable; but not for their sweet land
Fighting, but not a sacrifice, lo these
Dead; for I had not then shed all mine
heart
Out at mine eyes: then either with good
speed,
Being just, I had slain their slayer aton-
ingly,
Or strewn with flowers their fire and on
their tombs

Hung crowns, and over them a song, and seen
 Their praise outflame their ashes ; for all men,
 All maidens, had come thither, and from pure lips
 Shed songs upon them, from heroic eyes
 Tears; and their death had been a deathless life;
 But now, by no man hired nor alien sword,
 By their own kindred are they fallen, in peace,
 After much peril, friendless among friends,
 By hateful hands they loved; and how shall mine
 Touch these returning red and not from war,
 These fatal from the vintage of men's veins,
 Dead men my brethren ? how shall these wash off
 No festal stains of undelightful wine
 How mix the blood, my blood on them, with me,
 Holding mine hand ? or how shall I say, son,
 That am no sister ? but by night and day
 Shall we not sit and hate each other, and think
 Things hate-worthy ? not live with shamefast eyes,
 Brow-beaten, treading soft with fearful feet,
 Each unupbraided, each without rebuke
 Convicted, and without a word reviled
 Each of another ? and I shall let thee live
 And see thee strong and heat men for thy sake
 Praise me, but these thou wouldest not let live
 No man shall praise for ever ? these shall lie
 Dead, unloved, unholpen, all through thee ?
 Sweet were they toward me living, and mine heart
 Desired them, but was then well satisfied,
 That now is as men hungered ; and these dead
 I shall want always to the day I die
 For all things else and all men may renew ;
 Yea, son for son the gods may give and take,
 But never a brother or sister any more.

CHORUS.

Nay, for the son lies close about thine heart,
 Full of thy milk, warm from thy womb, and drains
 Life and blood of life and all thy fruit,
 Eats thee and drinks thee as who breaks bread and eats,
 Treads wine and drinks, thyself a sect of thee;
 And if he feed not, shall not thy flesh faint ?
 Or drink not, are not thy lips dead for thirst ?
 This thing moves more than all things, even thy son,
 That thou cleave to him; and he shall honor thee,
 Thy womb that bare him and the breasts he knew,
 Reverencing most for thy sake all his gods.

ALTHÆA.

But these the gods too gave me, and these my son,
 Not reverencing his gods nor mine own heart
 Nor the old sweet years nor all venerable things,
 But cruel, and in his ravin like a beast,
 Hath taken away to slay them : yea, and she,
 She the strange woman, she the flower, the sword,
 Red from spilt blood, a mortal flower to men,
 Adorable, detestable—even she
 Saw with strange eyes and with strange lips rejoiced,
 Seeing these mine own slain of mine own, and me
 Made miserable above all miseries made,
 A grief among all women in the world,
 A name to be washed out with all men's tears.

CHORUS.

Strengthen thy spirit; is this not also a god,
 Chance, and the wheel of all necessities ?
 Hard things have fallen upon us from harsh gods,
 Whom lest worse hap rebuke we not for these.

ALTHÆA.

My spirit is strong against itself, and I
 For these things sake cry out on mine own
 soul
 That it endures outrage, and dolorous
 days,
 And life, and this inexpiable impotence.
 Weak am I, weak and shameful; my breath
 drawn
 Shames me, and monstrous things and
 violent gods.
 What shall atone? what heal me? what
 bring back
 Strength to the foot, light to the face?
 what herb
 Assuage me? what restore me? what re-
 lease?
 What strange things eaten or drunken, O
 great gods,
 Make me as you or as the beasts that feed,
 Slay and divide and cherish their own
 hearts?
 For these ye show us; and we less than
 these
 Have not wherewith to live as all these
 things
 Which all their lives fare after their own
 kind
 As who doth well rejoicing; but we ill,
 Weeping or laughing, we whom eyesight
 fails,
 Knowledge and light of face and perfect
 heart,
 And hands we lack, and wit; and all our
 days
 Sin, and have hunger, and die infatuated.
 For madness have ye given us and not
 health,
 And sins whereof we know not; and for
 these
 Death, and sudden destruction unaware.
 What shall we say now? what thing comes
 of us?

CHORUS.

Alas, for all this all men undergo.

ALTHÆA.

Wherefore I will not that these twain, O
 gods,
 Die as a dog dies, eaten of creeping things,
 Abominable, a loathing; but though dead
 Shall they have honor and such funereal
 flame
 As strews men's ashes in their enemies'
 face

And blinds their eyes who hate them: lest
 men say,
 "Lo how they lie, and living had great
 kin,
 And none of these hath pity of them, and
 and none
 Regards them lying, and none is wrung at
 heart,
 None moved in spirit for them, naked and
 slain,
 Abhorred, abased, and no tears comfort
 them";
 And in the dark this grieve Eurythemis,
 Hearing how these her sons come down to
 her
 Unburied, unavenged, as kinless men,
 And had a queen their sister. That were
 shame
 Worse than this grief. Yet how to atone
 at all
 I know not; seeing the love of my born
 son,
 A new-made mother's new born-love, that
 grows
 From the soft child to the strong man,
 now soft,
 Now strong as either, and still one sole
 same love,
 Strives with me, no light thing to strive
 withal:
 This love is deep, and natural to man's
 blood,
 And ineffaceable with many tears.
 Yet shall not these rebuke me though I
 die.
 Nor she in that waste world with all her
 dead,
 My mother, among the pale flocks fallen
 as leaves,
 Folds of dead people, and alien from the
 sun;
 Nor lack some bitter comfort, some poor
 praise,
 Being queen, to have borne her daughter
 like a queen,
 Righteous; and though mine own fire burn
 me too,
 She shall have honor and these her sons,
 though dead.
 But all the gods will, all they do, and we
 Not all we would, yet somewhat; and one
 choice
 We have, to live and do just deeds and
 die.

CHORUS.

Terrible words she communes with, and
turns
Swift fiery eyes in doubt against herself,
And murmurs as who talks in dreams with
death.

ALTHÆA.

For the unjust also dieth, and him all men
Hate, and himself abhors the unrighteous-
ness,
And seeth his own dishonor intolerable.
But I being just, doing right upon myself,
Slay mine own soul, and no man born
shames me,
For none constrains nor shall rebuke, being
done,
What none compelled me doing; thus these
things fare
Ah, ah, that such things should so fare; ah
me,
That I am found to do them and endure,
Chosen and constrained to chose, and bear
myself
Mine own wound through mine own flesh
to the heart
Violently stricken, a spoiler and a spoil,
A ruin ruinous, fallen on mine own son.
Ah, ah, for me too as for these; alas,
For that is done that shall be, and mine
hand
Full of the deed, and full of blood mine
eyes,
That shall see never nor touch anything
Save blood unstanch'd and fire unquench-
able.

CHORUS.

What wilt thou do? what ails thee? for
the house
Shakes ruinously; wilt thou bring fire for
it?

ALTHÆA.

Fire in the roofs, and on the lintels fire.
Lo ye, who stand and weave, between the
doors,
There; and blood drips from hand and
thread, and stains
Threshold and raiment and me passing in
Flecked with the sudden sanguine drops of
death.

CHORUS.

Alas that time is stronger than strong men,
Fate than all gods: and these are all fallen
on us.

ALTHÆA.

A little since and I was glad; and now
I never shall be glad or sad again.

CHORUS.

Between two joys a grief grows unaware

ALTHÆA.

A little while and I shall laugh; and then
I shall weep never and laugh not any
more.

CHORUS.

What shall be said? for words are thorns
to grief.
Withhold thyself a little and fear the gods.

ALTHÆA.

Fear died when these were slain; and I am
as dead.
And fear is of the living; these fear none.

CHORUS.

Have pity upon all people for their sake.

ALTHÆA.

It is done now; shall I put back my day?

CHORUS.

And end is come, an end; this is of God.

ALTHÆA.

I am fire, and burn myself; keep clear
of fire.

CHORUS.

The house is broken, is broken; it shall
not stand.

ALTHÆA.

Woe, woe for him that breaketh; and a
rod
Smote it of old, and now the axe is here.

CHORUS.

Not as with sundering of the earth
Nor as with cleaving of the sea
Nor fierce foreshadowings of a birth
Nor flying dreams of death to be
Nor loosening of the large world's girth
And quickening of the body of night,
And sound of thunder in men's ears
And fire of lightning in men's sight,
Fate, mother of desires and fears,

Bore unto men the law of tears;
 But sudden, an unfathered flame,
 And broken out of night, she shone,
 She, without body, without name,
 In days forgotten and foregone;
 And heaven rang round her as she came
 Like smitten cymbals, and lay bare;
 Clouds and great stars, thunders and
 snows,
 The blue sad fields and folds of air,
 The life that breathes, the life that
 grows,
 All wind, all fire, that burns or blows,
 Even all these knew her: for she is great;
 The daughter of doom, the mother of
 death
 The sister of sorrow; a lifelong weight
 That no man's finger lighteneth,
 Nor any god can lighten fate;
 A landmark seen across the way
 Where one race treads as the other trod;
 An evil sceptre, an evil stay,
 Wrought for a staff, wrought for a rod,
 The bitter jealousy of God.
 For death is deep as the sea,
 And fate as the waves thereof.
 Shall the waves take pity on thee
 Or the south-wind offer thee love?
 Wilt thou take the night for thy day
 Or the darkness for light on thy way
 Till thou say in thine heart, Enough?
 Behold, thou art over fair, thou art over
 wise;
 The sweetness of spring in thine hair, and
 the light in thine eyes.
 The light of the spring in thine eyes, and
 the sound in thine ears;
 Yet thine heart shall wax heavy with sighs
 and thine eyelids with tears.
 Wilt thou cover thine hair with gold; and
 with silver thy feet?
 Hast thou taken the purple to fold thee,
 and made thy mouth sweet?
 Behold, when thy face is made bare, he
 that loved thee shall hate;
 Thy face shall be no more fair at the fall of
 thy fate.
 For thy life shall fall as a leaf and be shed
 as the rain;
 And the veil of thine head shall be grief;
 and the crown shall be pain.

ATHÆA.

Ho ye that wail, and ye that sing, make
 way

Till I be come among you. Hide your
 tears,
 Ye little weepers, and your laughing lips,
 Ye laughers for a little; lo mine eyes
 That outweep heaven at rainiest, and my
 mouth
 That laughs as gods laugh at us. Fate's
 are we,
 Yet fate is ours a breathing-space; yea,
 mine,
 Fate is made mine forever; he is my son,
 My oedfellow, my brother. You strong
 gods,
 Give place unto me; I am as any of you,
 To give life and to take life. Thou old
 earth,
 That hast made man and unmade; thou
 whose mouth
 Looks red from the eaten fruits of thine
 own womb;
 Behold me with what lips upon what food
 I feed and fill my body, even with flesh
 Made of my body. Lo, the fire I lit
 I burn with fire to quench it; yea, with
 flame
 I burn up even the dust and ash thereof.

CHORUS.

Woman, what fire is this thou burnest
 with?

ALTHÆA.

Yea to the bone, yea to the blood and all.

CHORUS.

For this thy face and hair are as one fire.

ALTHÆA.

A tongue that licks and beats upon the
 dust.

CHORUS.

And in thine eyes are hollow light and
 heat.

ALTHÆA.

Of flame not fed with hand or frankin-
 cense.

CHORUS.

I fear thee for the trembling of thine eyes.

ALTHÆA.

Neither with love they tremble nor for
 fear.

CHORUS.

And thy mouth shuddering like a shot
bird.

ALTHÆA.

Not as the bride's mouth when the man
kisses it.

CHORUS.

Nay, but what thing is this thing thou hast
done?

ALTHÆA.

Look, I am silent, speak your eyes for me.

CHORUS.

I see a faint fire lightening from the hall.

ALTHÆA.

Gaze, stretch your eyes, strain till the lids
drop off.

CHORUS.

Flushed pillars down the flickering vesti-
bule.

ALTHÆA.

Stretch with your necks like birds: cry,
chirp as they.

CHORUS.

And a long brand that blackens: and
white dust.

ALTHÆA.

O children, what is this ye see? your eyes
Are blinder than night's face at fall of
moon,

That is my son, my flesh, my fruit of life,
My travail, and the year's weight of my
womb.

Meleager, a fire enkindled of mine hands,
And of mine hands extinguished; this is he.

CHORUS.

O gods, what word has flown out at thy
mouth?

ALTHÆA.

I did this and I say this and I die.

CHORUS.

Death stands upon the doorway of thy lips,
And in thy mouth has death set up his
house.

ALTHÆA.

O death, a little, a little while, sweet
death,
Until I see the brand burnt down and die.

CHORUS.

She reels as any reed under the wind,
And cleaves unto the ground with stagger-
ing feet.

ALTHÆA.

Girls, one thing will I say and hold my
peace.

I that did this will weep not nor cry out,
Cry ye and weep: I will not call on gods,
Call ye on them; I will not pity man,
Shew ye your pity. I know not if I
live;

Save that I feel the fire upon my face
And on my cheek the burning of a brand.
Yea the smoke bites me, yea I drink the
steam

With nostril and with eyelid and with lip
Insatiate and intolerant; and mine hands
Burn, and fire feeds upon mine eyes; I
reel

As one made drunk with living, whence
he draws

Drunken delight; yet I though mad for
joy,

Loathe my long living and am waxen red
As with the shadow of shed blood; be-
hold,

I am kindled with the flames that fade in
him,

I am swollen with subsiding of his veins,
I am flooded with his ebbing; my lit eyes
Flame with the falling fire that leaves his
lids

Bloodless; my cheek is luminous with
blood

Because his face is ashen. Yet, O child,
Son, first-born, fairest—O sweet mouth,
sweet eyes,

That drew my life out through my suckling
breast,

That shone and clove my heart through,—
O soft knees

Clinging, O tender treadings of soft feet,
Cheeks warm with little kissings,—O child,
child,

What have we made each other? Lo, I
felt

Thy weight cleave to me, a burden of
beauty, O son,

Thy cradled brows and loveliest loving
lips,

The floral hair, the little lightening eyes,
And all thy goodly glory: with mine
hands

Delicately I fed thee, with my tongue
Tenderly spake, saying, Verily in God's
time,

For all the little likeness of thy limbs,
Son, I shall make thee a kingly man to
fight,

A lordly leader; and hear before I die,
"She bore the goodliest sword of all the
world,"

Oh! oh! For all my life turns round on
me;

I am severed from myself, my name is
gone,

My name that was a healing, it is changed,
My name is a consuming. From this
time,

Though mine eyes reach to the end of all
these things,

My lips shall not unfasten till I die.

SEMICHORUS.

She has filled with sighing the city,

And the ways thereof with tears;

She arose, she girdled her sides,

She set her face as a bride's;

She wept, and she had no pity;

Trembled and felt no fears.

SEMICHORUS.

Her eyes were clear as the sun,

Her brows were fresh as the day;

She girdled herself with gold,

Her robes were manifold;

But the days of her worship are done,

Her praise is taken away.

SEMICHORUS.

For she set her hand to the fire;

With her mouth she kindled the same;

As the mouth of a flute-player.

So was the mouth of her;

With the might of her strong desire

She blew the breath of the flame.

SEMICHORUS.

She set her hand to the wood,

She took the fire in her hand;

As one who is nigh to death,

She panted with strange breath;

She opened her lips unto blood,

She breathed and kindled the brand

SEMICHORUS.

As wood-dove newly shot,

She sobbed and lifted her breast;

She sighed and covered her eyes,

Filling her lips with sighs;

She sighed, she withdrew herself not,

She refrained not, taking not rest;

SEMICHORUS.

But as the wind which is drouth,

And as the air which is death,

As storm that severeth ships,

Her breath severing her lips,

The breath came forth of her mouth

And the fire came forth of her breath.

SECOND MESSENGER.

Queen, and you maidens, there is come
on us

A thing more deadly than the face of
death;

Meleager the good lord is as one slain.

SEMICHORUS.

Without sword, without sword is he
stricken;

Slain, and slain without hand.

SECOND MESSENGER.

For as keen ice divided of the sun

His limbs divide, and as thawed snow the
flesh

Thaws from off all his body to the hair.

SEMICHORUS.

He wastes as the embers quicken;

With the brand he fades as a brand.

SECOND MESSENGER.

Even while they sang and all drew hither
and he

Lifted both hands to crown the Arcadian's
hair

And fix the looser leaves, both hands fell
down.

SEMICHORUS.

With rending of cheek and of hair

Lament ye, mourn for him, weep.

SECOND MESSENGER.

Straightway the crown slid off and smote
on earth.

First fallen; and he, grasping his own hair,
groaned

And cast his raiment round his face and
fell.

SEMICHORUS.

Alas for visions that were,
And soothsayings spoken in sleep.

SECOND MESSENGER.

But the king twitched his reins in and leapt
down
And caught him, crying out twice, "O
child," and thrice
So that men's eyelids thickened with their
tears.

SEMICHORUS.

Lament with a long lamentation,
Cry, for an end is at hand.

SECOND MESSENGER.

O son, he said, son, lift thine eyes, draw
breath,
Pity me; but Meleager with sharp lips
Gasped, and his face waxed like as sun-
burnt grass.

SEMICHORUS.

Cry aloud, O thou kingdom, O nation,
O stricken, a ruinous land.

SECOND MESSENGER.

Whereat king Cœnus, straightening feeble
knees,
With feeble hands heaved up a lessening
weight,
And laid him sadly in strange hands, and
wept.

SEMICHORUS.

Thou art smitten, her lord, her desire,
Thy dear blood wasted as rain.

SECOND MESSENGER.

And they with tears and rendings of the
beard
Bear hither a breathing body, wept upon.
And lightning at each footfall, sick to
death.

SEMICHORUS.

Thou madest thy sword as a fire,
With fire for a sword thou art slain.

SECOND MESSENGER.

And lo the feast turned funeral and the
crowns

Fallen; and the huntress and the hunter
trapped;
And weeping and changed faces and veiled
hair.

MELEAGER.

Let your hands meet
Round the weight of my head
Lift ye my feet
As the feet of the dead;
For the flesh of my body is molten, the
limbs of it molten as lead.

CHORUS.

O thy luminous face,
Thine imperious eyes !
O the grief, O the grace,
As of the day when it dies !
Who is this bending over thee, lord, with
tears and suppression of sighs !

MELEAGER,

Is a bride so fair ?
Is a maid so meek ?
With unchapleted hair
With unfileted cheek,
Atalanta, the pure among women, whose
name is as blessing to speak.

ATALANTA.

I would that with feet,
Unsaddled, unsaddled.
Overbold, overfleet,
I had swum not nor trod
From Arcadia to Calydon, northward, a
blast of the envy of God.

MELEAGER.

Unto each man his fate;
Unto each as he saith
In whose fingers the weight
Of the world is as breath;
Yet I would that in clamor of battle mine
hands had laid hold upon death.

CHORUS.

Not with cleaving of shields
And their clash in thine ear,
When the lord of fought fields
Breaketh spearshaft from spear,
Thou art broken, our lord, thou art broken,
with travail and labor and fear.

MELEAGER.

Would God he had found me
Beneath fresh boughs !

Would God he had bound me
Unawares in mine house,
With light in mine eyes, and songs in my
lips, and a crown on my brows !

CHORUS.

Whence art thou sent from us ?
Whither thy goal ?
How art thou rent from us,
Thou that wert whole,
As with severing of eyelids and eyes, as
with sundering of body and soul !

MELEAGER.

My heart is within me
As an ash in the fire ;
Whosoever hath seen me,
Without lute, without lyre,
Shall sing of me grievous things, even
things that were ill to desire.

CHORUS.

Who shall raise thee
From the house of the dead ?
Or what man praise thee
That thy praise may be said ?
Alas thy beauty ! alas thy body ! alas
thine head !

MELEAGER.

But thou, O mother,
That dreamer of dreams,
Wilt thou bring forth another
To feel the sun's beams
When I move among shadows a shadow,
and wail by impassable streams ?

CENEUS.

What thing wilt thou leave me
Now this thing is done ?
A man wilt thou give me,
A son for my son,
For the light of mine eyes, the desire of
my life, the desirable one ?

CHORUS.

Thou wert glad above others,
Yea, fair beyond word ;
Thou wert glad among mothers ;
For each man that heard
Of thee, praise there was added unto thee,
as wings to the feet of a bird.

CENEUS.

Who shall give back
Thy face of old years,

With travail made black,
Grown gray among fears,
Mother of sorrow, mother of cursing,
mother of tears ?

MELEAGER.

Though thou art as fire
Fed with fuel in vain,
My delight, desire,
Is more chaste than the rain,
More pure than the dewfall, more holy
than stars are that live without stain.

ATALANTA.

I would that as water
My life's blood had thawed,
Or as winter's wan daughter
Leaves lowland and lawn
Spring-stricken, or ever mine eyes had be-
held thee made dark in thy dawn.

CHORUS.

When thou dravest the men
Of the chosen of Thrace,
None turned him again
Nor endured he thy face
Clothed round with the blush of the battle,
with light from a terrible place,

CENEUS.

Thou shouldst die as he dies
For whom none sheddeth tears ;
Filling thine eyes
And fulfilling thine ears.
With the brilliance of battle, the bloom
and the beauty, the splendor of spears.

CHORUS.

In the ears of the world
It is sung, it is told,
And the light thereof hurled
And the noise thereof rolled
From the Acroceraunian snow to the ford
of the fleece of gold.

MELEAGER.

Would God ye could carry me
Forth of all these ;
Heap sand and bury me
By the Chersonese
Where the thundering Bosphorus answers
the thunder of Pontic seas.

CENEUS.

Dost thou mock at our praise
And the singing begun

And the men of strange days
Praising my son
In the folds of the hills of home, high
places of Calydon?

MELEAGER.

For the dead man no home is;
Ah, better to be
What the flower of the foam is
In fields of the sea,
That the sea-waves might be as my raiment,
the gulf-stream a garment for me.

CHORUS.

Who shall seek thee and bring
And restore thee thy day,
When the dove dipt her wing
And the oars won their way,
Where the narrowing Symplegades whitened
the straits of Propontis with spray?

MELEAGER.

Will ye crown me my tomb
Or exalt me my name,
Now my spirits consume
Now my flesh is a flame?
Let the sea slake it once, and men speak
of me sleeping to praise me or shame.

CHORUS.

Turn back now, turn thee,
As who turns him to wake;
Though the life in thee burn thee,
Couldst thou bathe it and slake
Where the sea-ridge of Helle hangs heavier,
and east upon west waters break?

MELEAGER.

Would the winds blow me back
Or the waves hurl me home?
Ah, to touch in the track
Where the pine learnt to roam
Cold girdles and crowns of the sea-gods,
cool blossoms of water and foam!

CHORUS.

The gods may release
That they made fast;
Thy soul shall have ease
In thy limbs at the last;
But what shall they give thee for life, sweet
life that is overpast?

MELEAGER.

Not the life of men's veins,
Not of flesh that conceives;
But the grace that remains,
The fair beauty that cleaves
To the life of the rains in the grasses, the
life of the dew on the leaves.

CHORUS.

Thou wert helmsman and chief;
Wilt thou turn in an hour,
Thy limbs to the leaf,
Thy face to the flower,
Thy blood to the water, thy soul to the
gods who divide and devour?

MELEAGER.

The years are hungry,
They wait all their days;
The gods wax angry
And weary of praise;
And who shall bridle their lips? and who
shall straiten their ways?

CHORUS.

The gods guard over us
With sword and with rod;
Weaving shadow to cover us,
Heaping the sod,
That law may fulfil herself wholly, to
darken man's face before God.

MELEAGER.

O holy head of Ceres, lo thy son
Guiltless, yet red from alien guilt, yet foul
With kinship of contaminated lives,
Lo for their blood I die; and mine own
blood
For bloodshedding of mine is mixed there-
with,
That death may not discern me from my
kin.
Yet with clean heart I die and faultless
hand,
Not shamefully; thou therefore of thy
love
Salute me, and bid fare among the dead
Well, as the dead fare; for the best man
dead
Fares sadly; nathless I now faring well
Pass without fear where nothing is to fear,
Having thy love about me and thy good-
will,
O father, among dark places and men
dead.

GENEUS.

Child, ^{tears,} ~~salute~~ thee with sad heart and
 And bid thee comfort, being a perfect
 man
 In fight, and honorable in the house of
 peace.
 The gods give thee fair wage and dues of
 death,
 And me brief days and ways to come at
 thee.

MELEAGER.

Pray thou thy days be long before thy
 death,
 And full of ease and kingdom; seeing in
 death
 There is no comfort and none aftergrowth,
 Nor shall one thence look up and see day's
 dawn
 Nor light upon the land whither I go.
 Live thou and take thy fill of days and
 die
 When thy day comes; and make not much
 of death
 Lest ere thy day thou reap an evil thing.
 Thou, too, the bitter mother and mother-
 plague
 Of this my weary body,—thou too, queen,
 The source and end, the sower and the
 scythe,
 The rain that ripens and the drought that
 slays,
 The sand that swallows and the spring
 that feeds,
 To make me and unmake me,—thou, I
 say,
 Althæa, since my father's ploughshare,
 drawn
 Through fatal seedland of a female field,
 Furrowed thy body, whence a wheaten
 ear
 Strong from the sun and fragrant from the
 rains
 I sprang and cleft the closure of thy
 womb,
 Mother, I dying with unforgetful tongue
 Hail thee as holy and worship thee as
 just
 Who art unjust and unholy; and with my
 knees
 Would worship, but thy fire and subtlety,
 Dissundering them, devour me; for these
 limbs

Are as light dust and crumbings from
 mine urn
 Before the fire has touched them; and my
 face
 As a dead leaf or dead foot's mark on
 snow,
 And all this body a broken barren tree
 That was so strong, and all this flower of
 life
 Disbranched and desecrated miserably,
 And minished all that god-like muscle and
 night
 And lesser than a man's: for all my veins
 Fail me, and all mine ashen life burns
 down.
 I would thou hadst let me live; but gods
 averse,
 But fortune, and the fiery feet of change,
 And time, these would not, these tread out
 my life,
 These, and not thou; me, too, thou hast
 loved, and I
 Thee; but this death was mixed with all
 my life,
 Mine end with my beginning; and this
 law,
 This only, slays me, and not my mother at
 all.
 And let no brother or sister grieve too
 sore,
 Nor melt their hearts out on me with their
 tears,
 Since extreme love and sorrowing over-
 much
 Vex the great gods, and overloving men
 Slay and are slain for love's sake; and this
 house
 Shall bear much better children; why
 should these
 Weep? but in patience let them live their
 lives
 And mine pass by forgotten: thou alone,
 Mother, thou sole and only, thou not
 these,
 Keep me in mind a little when I die
 Because I was thy first-born; let thy soul
 Pity me, pity even me gone hence and
 dead,
 Though thou wert wroth, and though thou
 bear again
 Much happier sons, and all men later
 born
 Exceedingly excel me; yet do thou
 Forget not, nor think shame; I was thy
 son.

Time was I did not shame thee; and time
was
I thought to live and make thee honorable
With deeds as great as these men's; but
they live,
These, and I die; and what thing should
have been
Surely I know not; yet I charge thee, see-
ing
I am dead already, love me not the less,
Me, O my mother; I charge thee by these
gods,
My father's, and that holier breast of
thine,
By these that see me dying, and that which
nursed,
Love me not less, thy first-born: though
grief come,
Grief only, of me, and of all these great
joy,
And shall come always to thee; for thou
knowest
O mother, O breasts that bare me, for ye
know
O sweet head of my mother, sacred eyes,
Ye know my soul albeit I sinned, ye
know
Albeit I kneel not neither touch thy
knees,
But with my lips I kneel, and with my
heart
I fall about thy feet and worship thee.
And ye, farewell now, all my friends; and
ye,
Kinsmen, much younger and glorious
more than I
Sons of my mother's sister; and all fare-
well
That were in Colchis with me, and bare
down
The waves and wars that met us and though
times
Change, and though now I be not any-
thing,
Forget not me among you, what I did
In my good time; for even by all those
days,
Those days and this, and your own living
souls,
And by the light and luck of you that live,
And by this miserable spoil, and me
Dying, I beseech you, let my name not
die.

But thou, dear, touch me with thy rose-like
hands,
And fasten up mine eyelids with thy
mouth,
A bitter kiss; and grasp me with thine
arms
Printing with heavy lips my light waste
flesh,
Made light and thin by heavy-handed
fate,
And with thine holy maiden eyes drop
dew,
Drop tears for dew upon me who am
dead,
Me who have loved thee; seeing without
sin done
I am gone down to the empty weary
house
Where no flesh is nor beauty nor swift
eyes
Nor sound of mouth nor might of hands
and feet,
But thou, dear, hide my body with thy
veil,
And with thy raiment cover foot and head,
And stretch thyself upon me and touch
hands
With hands and lips with lips: be pitiful
As thou art maiden perfect; let no man
Dette me to despise me, saying, This
man
Die woman-wise, a woman's offering, slain
Through female fingers in his woof of life,
Dishonourable; for thou hast honored me,
And now for God's sake kiss me once and
twice
And let me go; for the night gathers me
And in the night shall no man gather
fruit.

ATALANTA.

Hail thou: but I with heavy face and
feet
Turn homeward and am gone out of thine
eyes.

CHORUS.

Who shall contend with his lords
Or cross them or do them wrong?
Who shall bind them as with cords?
Who shall tame them as with song?
Who shall smite them as with swords?
For the hands of their kingdom are
strong.

ERECHTHEUS:

A TRAGEDY.

ὦ ται λιλαραὶ καὶ ἰοστέφιν οἱ καὶ ἀοίδιμοι,
Ἑλλάδος ἔρεισμα, κλειναὶ Ἀθᾶναι, δαιμόνιον προλήθερον.

PIND. *Fr.* 47.

AT. τίς δὲ ποιάνωρ ἔπεσσι ἀπιδεσπόζει στρατοῦ;

XO. οὔτινος δοῦλοι κέκληται φωτός οὐδ' ὑπηκόοι.

ÆSCH. *Pers.* 241-2.

PERSONS.

ERECHTHEUS.

CHORUS OF ATHENIAN ELDERS.

PRAXITHEA.

CHTHONIA.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

MESSENGER.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

ATHENA.

ERECHTHEUS.

MOTHER of life and death and all men's days,
Earth, whom I chief of all men born would
bless,

And call thee with more loving lips than theirs
Mother, for of this very body of thine
And living blood I have my breath and live,
Behold me, even thy son, me crowned of men,
Me made thy child by that strong cunning
God

Who fashions fire and iron, who begat

Me for a sword and beacon-fire on thee,
Me fostering of Pallas, in her shade
Reared, that I first might pay the nursing
debt,
Hallowing her fame with flower of third-year
feasts, [steeds
And first bow down the bridled strength of
To lose the wild wont of their birth, and bear
Clasp of man's knees and steerage of his hand,
Or fourfold service of his fire-swift wheels

That whirl the four-yoked chariot ; me the king

Who stand before thee naked now, and cry,
O holy and general mother of all men born,
But mother most and motherliest of mine,
Earth, for I ask thee rather of all the Gods,
What have we done ? what word mistimed or work

Hath winged the wild feet of this timeless curse

To fall as fire upon us ? Lo, I stand
Here on this brow's crown of the city's head
That crowns its lovely body, till death's hour
Waste it ; but now the dew of dawn and birth
Is fresh upon it from thy womb, and we
Behold it born how beauteous ; one day more
I see the world's wheel of the circling sun
Roll up rejoicing to regard on earth
This one thing goodliest, fair as heaven or he,
Worth a God's gaze or strife of Gods ; but now

Would this day's ebb of their spent wave of strife

Sweep it to sea, wash it on wreck, and leave
A costless thing contemned ; and in our stead,
Where these walls were and sounding streets of men,

Make wide a waste for tongueless water-herds
And spoil of ravening fishes ; that no more
Should men say, Here was Athens. This shalt thou

Sustain not, nor thy son endure to see,
Nor thou to live and look on ; for the womb
Bare me not base that bare me miserable,
To hear this loud brood of the Thracian foam
Break its broad strength of billowy-beating war

Here, and upon it as a blast of death
Blowing, the keen wrath of a fire-souled king,
A strange growth grafted on our natural soil,
A root of Thrace in Eleusinian earth
Set for no comfort to the kindly land,
Son of the sea's lord and our first-born foe,
Eumolpus ; nothing sweet in ears of thine
The music of his making, nor a song
Toward hopes of ours auspicious ; for the note
Rings as for death oracular to thy sons
That goes before him on the sea-wind blown
Full of this charge laid on me, to put out
The brief light kindled of mine own child's life,

Or with this helmsman hand that steers the state

Run right on the under shoal and ridge of death

The populous ship with all its fraughtage gone
And sails that were to take the wind of time
Rent, and the tackling that should hold out fast
In confluent surge of loud calamities
Broken, with spars of rudders and lost oars
That were to row toward harbor and find rest
In some most glorious haven of all the world
And else may never near it : such a song

The Gods have set his lips on fire withal
Who threatens now in all their names to bring
Ruin ; but none of these, thou knowest, have I
Child with my tongue or cursed at heart for grief,

Knowing how the soul runs reinless on sheer death

Whose grief or joy takes part against the Gods.
And what they will is more than our desire,
And their desire is more than what we will.
For no man's will and no desire of man's
Shall stand as doth a God's will. Yet, O fair
Mother, that seest me how I cast no word
Against them, plead no reason, crave no cause,
Boast me not blameless, nor beweepe me wronged,

By this fair wreath of towers we have decked thee with,

This chaplet that we give thee woven of walls,
This girdle of gate and temple and citadel
Drawn round beneath thy bosom, and fast linked

As to thine heart's root—this dear crown of thine,

This present light, this city—be not thou
Slow to take heed nor slack to strengthen her,
Fare we so short-lived howsoever, and pay
What price we may to ransom thee thy town,
Not me my life ; but thou that diest not, thou,
Though all our house die for this people's sake
Keep thou for ours thy crown our city, guard
And give it life the lovelier that we died.

CHORUS.

Sun, that hast lightened and loosed by thy might

Ocean and Earth from the lordship of night,
Quickening with vision his eye, that was veiled,
Freshening the force in her heart that had failed,

That sister fettered and blinded brother
Should have sight by thy grace and delight of each other,

Behold now and see

What profit is given them of thee ;
What wrath has enkindled with madness of mind

Her limbs that were bounden, his face that
was blind,
To be locked as in wrestle together, and light-
en

With fire that shall darken thy fire in the sky,
Body to body and eye against eye

In a war against kind,

Till the bloom of her fields and her high hills
whiten

With the foam of his waves more high.

For the sea-marks set to divide of old

The kingdoms to Ocean and Earth assigned,

The hoar sea-fields from the cornfields' gold,

His wine-bright waves from her vineyards' fold,

Frail forces we find

To bridle the spirit of Gods or bind

Till the heat of their hearts wax cold.

But the peace that was stablished between
them to stand

Is rent now in twain by the strength of his hand

Who stirs up the storm of his sons overbold

To pluck from fight what he lost of right,

By council and judgment of Gods that spake

And gave great Pallas the strife's fair stake,

The lordship and love of the lovely land,

The grace of the town that hath on it for crown

But a headband to wear

Of violets one-hued with her hair :

For the vales and the green high places of
earth

Holds nothing so fair,

And the depths of the sea bear no such birth

Of the manifold births they bear.

Too well, too well was the great stake worth

A strife divine for the Gods to judge,

A crowned God's triumph, a foiled God's
grudge,

Though the loser be strong and the victress
wise

Who played so long since for so large a prize,

The fruitful immortal anointed adored

Dear city of men without master or lord,

Fair fortress and fostress of sons born free,

Who stand in her sight and in thine, O sun,

Slaves of no man, subjects of none ;

A wonder enthroned on the hills and sea,

A maiden crowned with a fourfold glory

That none from the pride of her head may
rend,

Violet and olive-leaf purple and hoary,

Song-wreath and story the fairest of fame,

Flowers that the winter can blast not or bend ;

A light upon earth as the sun's own flame,

A name as his name,

Athens, a praise without end.

A noise is arisen against us of waters,

A sound as of battle come up from the sea.

Strange hunters are hard on us, hearts without
pity ;

They have staked their nets round the fair
young city,

That the sons of her strength and her virgin
daughters

Should find not whither alive to flee.

And we know not yet of the word unwritten,

The doom of the Pythian we have not heard ;

From the navel of earth and the veiled mid
altar

We wait for a token with hopes that falter,

With fears that hang on our hearts thought-
smitten

Lest her tongue be kindled with no good
word.

O thou not born of the womb, nor bred

In the bride-night's warmth of a changed God's
bel,

But thy life as a lightning was flashed from the
light of thy father's head,

O chief God's child by a motherless birth,

If aught in thy sight we indeed be worth,

Keep death from us thou, that art none of the
Gods of the dead under earth.

Thou that hast power on us, save, if thou
wilt ;

Let the blind wave breach not thy wall
scarce built ;

But bless us not so as by bloodshed, impute
not for grace to us guilt,

Nor by price of pollution of blood set us
free ;

Let the hands be taintless that clasp thy
knee,

Nor a maiden be slain to redeem for a maiden
her shrine from the sea.

O earth, O sun, turn back

Full on his deadly track

Death, that would smite you black and mar
your creatures,

And with one hand disroot

All tender flower and fruit,

With one strike blind and mute the heaven's
fair features,

Pluck out the eyes of morn, and make

Silence in the east and blackness whence the
bright songs break.

Help, earth, help, heaven, that hear

The song-notes of our fear,

Shrewd notes and shrill, not clear or joyful-
sounding ;

Hear, highest of Gods, and stay

Death on his hunter's way,
Full on his forceless prey his beagles hounding ;
Break thou his bow, make short his hand,
Maim his fleet foot whose passage kills the living land.
Let a third wave smite not us, father,
Long since sore smitten of twain,
Lest the house of thy son's son perish
And his name be barren on earth.
Whose race wilt thou comfort rather
If none to thy son remain ?
Whose seed wilt thou choose to cherish
If his be cut off in the birth ?
For the first fair graft of his grafting
Was rent from its maiden root
By the strong swift hand of a lover
Who fills the night with his breath ;
On the lip of the stream low-laughing
Her green soft virginal shoot
Was plucked from the stream-side cover
By the grasp of a love like death.
For a God's was the mouth that kissed her
Who speaks, and the leaves lie dead,
When winter awakes as at warning
To the sound of his foot from Thrace.
Nor happier the bed of her sister
Though Love's self laid her abed
By a bridegroom beloved of the morning
And fair as the dawn's own face.
For Procris, ensnared and ensnaring
By the fraud of a twofold wile,
With the point of her own spear stricken
By the gift of her own hand fell.
Oversubtle in doubts, overdaring
In deeds and devices of guile,
And strong to quench as to quicken,
O Love, have we named thee well ?
By thee was the spear's edge whetted
That laid her dead in the dew,
In the moist green glens of the midland
By her dear lord slain and thee.
And him at the cliff's end fretted
By the grey keen waves, him too,
Thine hand from the white-browed
headland
Flung down for a spoil to the sea.
But enough now of griefs grey-growing
Have darkened the house divine,
Have flowered on its boughs and faded,
And green is the brave stock yet.
O father all-seeing and all-knowing,
Let the last fruit fall not of thine
From the tree with whose boughs we are
shaded,
From the stock that thy son's hand set.

ERECHTHEUS.

O daughter of Cephisus, from all time
Wise have I found thee, wife and queen, of heart
Perfect ; nor in the days that knew not wind
Nor days when storm blew death upon our peace
Was thine heart swoln with seed of pride, or bowed
With blasts of bitter fear that break men's souls
Who list too high their minds toward heaven,
in thought
Too godlike grown for worship ; but of mood
Equal, in good time reverent of time bad,
And glad in all days of the good that were.
Nor now too would I fear thee, now misdoubt
Lest fate should find thee lesser than thy doom,
Chosen if thou be to bear and to be great
Haply beyond all women ; and the word
Speaks thee divine, dear queen, that speaks
thee dead,
Dead being alive, or quick and dead in one
Shall not men call thee living ? yet I fear
To slay thee timeless with my proper tongue,
With lips, thou knowest, that love thee ; and
such work
Was never laid of Gods on men, such word
No mouth of man learnt ever, as from mine
Most loth to speak thine ear most loth shall
take
And hold it hateful as the grave to hear.

PRAXITHEA.

That word there is not in all speech of man,
King, that being spoken of the Gods and thee
I have not heart to honor, or dare hold
More than I hold thee or the Gods in hate
Hearing ; but if my heart abhor it heard
Being insubmissive, hold me not thy wife
But use me like a stranger, whom thine hand
Hath fed by chance and finding thence no
thanks
Flung off for shame's sake to forgetfulness.

ERECHTHEUS.

O, of what breath shall such a word be made,
Or from what heart find utterance ? Would my tongue
Were rent forth rather from the quivering root
Than made as fire or poison thus for thee.

PRAXITHEA.

But if thou speak of blood, and I that hear
Be chosen of all for this land's love to die
And save to thee thy city, know this well,
Happiest I hold me of her seed alive.

ERECHTHEUS.

O sun that seest, what saying was this of thine,
God, that thy power 'has breathed into my
lips?
For from no sunlit shrine darkling it came.

PRAXITHEA.

What portent from the mid oracular place
Hath smitten thee so like a curse that flies
Wingless, to waste men with its plagues? yet
speak.

ERECHTHEUS.

Thy blood the Gods require not; take this
first.

PRAXITHEA.

To me than thee more grievous this should
sound.

ERECHTHEUS.

That word rang truer and bitterer than it knew.

PRAXITHEA.

This is not then thy grief, to see me die?

ERECHTHEUS.

Die shalt thou not, yet give thy blood to death.

PRAXITHEA.

If this ring worse I know not; strange it rang.

ERECHTHEUS.

Alas, thou knowest not; woe is me that know.

PRAXITHEA.

And woe shall mine be, knowing; yet halt not
here.

ERECHTHEUS.

Guiltless of blood this state may stand no
more.

PRAXITHEA.

Firm let it stand whatever bleed or fall.

ERECHTHEUS.

O Gods, that I should say it shall and weep.

PRAXITHEA.

Weep, and say this? no tears should bathe
such words.

ERECHTHEUS.

Woe's me that I must weep upon them, woe

PRAXITHEA.

What stain is on them for thy tears to cleanse?

ERECHTHEUS.

A stain of blood unpurgeable with tears.

PRAXITHEA.

Whence? for thou sayest it is and is not mine.

ERECHTHEUS.

Hear then and know why only of all men I
That bring such news as mine is, I alone
Must wash good words with weeping; I and
thou,

Woman, must wail to hear men sing, must groan
To see their joy who love us; all our friends
Save only we, and all save we that love
This holiness of Athens, in our sight
Shall lift their hearts up, in our hearing praise
Gods whom we may not; for to these they
give

Life of their children, flower of all their seed,
For all their travail fruit, for all their hopes
Harvest; but we for all our good things, we
Have at their hands which fill all these folk full
Death, barrenness, child-slaughter, curses, cares,
Sea-leaguer and land-shipwreck; which of
these,

Which wilt thou first give thanks for? all are
thine.

PRAXITHEA.

What first they give who give this city good,
For that first given to save it I give thanks
First, and thanks heartier from a happier tongue,
More than for any my peculiar grace
Show me and not my country ; next for this,
That none of all these but for all these I
Must bear my burden, and no eye but mine
Weep of all women's in this broad land born
Who see their land's deliverance ; but much
more,

But most for this I thank them most of all,
That this their edge of doom is chosen to pierce
My heart and not my country's ; for the sword
Drawn to smite there and sharpened for such
stroke
Should wound more deep than any turned on
me.

CHORUS.

Well fares the land that bears such fruit, and
well
The spirit that breeds such thought and speech
in man.

ERECHTHEUS.

O woman, thou hast shamed my heart with
thine,
To show so strong a patience ; take then all ;
For all shall break not nor bring down thy
soul.
The word that journeying to the bright God's
shrine
Who speaks askance and darkling, but his
name
Hath in it slaying and ruin broad writ out,
I heard, hear thou : thus saith he ; There shall
die
One soul for all this people ; from thy womb
Came forth the seed that here on dry bare
ground
Death's hand must sow untimely, to bring
forth
Nor blade nor shoot in season, being by name
To the under Gods made holy, who require
For this land's life her death and maiden blood
To save a maiden city. Thus I heard,
And thus with all said leave thee ; for save
this
No word is left us, and no hope alive.

CHORUS.

He hath uttered too surely his wrath not ob-
scurely, nor wrapt as in mists of his breath,
The master that lightens not hearts he enlight-
ens, but gives them foreknowledge of death.
As a bolt from the cloud hath he sent it aloud
and proclaimed it afar,

From the darkness and height of the horror
of night hath he shown us a star.

Star may I name it ; and err not, or flame
shall I say,

Born of the womb that was born for the
tomb of the day ?

O Night, whom other but thee for mother, and
Death for the father, Night,
Shall we dream to discover, save thee and thy
lover, to bring such a sorrow to sight ?

From the slumberless bed for thy bedfellow
spread and his bride under earth

Hast thou brought forth a wild and insatiable
child, an unbearable birth.

Fierce are the fangs of his wrath, and the
pangs that they give ;

None is there, none that may bear them,
not one that would live.

CHTHONIA.

Forth of the fine-spun folds of veils that hide
My virgin chamber toward the full-faced sun
I set my foot not moved of mine own will,
Unmaidenlike, nor with unprompted speed
Turn eyes too broad or doglike unabashed
On reverend heads of men and thence on thine,
Mother, now covered from the light and bow-
ed

As hers who mourns her brethren ; but what
grief

Bends thy blind head thus earthward, holds
thus mute,

I know not till thy will be to lift up
Toward mine thy sorrow-muffled eyes and
speak ;

And till thy will be would I know this not.

PRAXITHEA.

Old men and childless, or if sons ye have seen
And daughters, elder-born were these than
mine,

Look on this child, how young of years, how
sweet,

How scant of time and green of age her life
Puts forth its flower of girlhood ; and her gait
How virginal, how soft her speech, her eyes
How seemly smiling ; wise should all ye be,

All honorable and kindly men of age ;
Now give me counsel and one word to say
That I may bear to speak, and hold my peace
Henceforth for all time even as all ye now.
Dumb are ye all, bowed eyes and tongueless
mouths.

Unprofitable ; if this were wind that speaks,
As much its breath might move you. Thou
then, child,

Set thy sweet eyes on mine ; look through
them well ;

Take note of all the writing of my face
As of a tablet or a tomb inscribed
That bears me record ; lifeless now, my life
Thereon that was think written ; brief to read,
Yet shall the scripture sear thine eyes as fire
And leave them dark as dead men's. Nay,
dear child,

Thou hast no skill, my maiden, and no sense
To take such knowledge ; sweet is all thy lore,
And all this bitter ; yet I charge thee learn
And love and lay this up within thine heart,
Even this my word ; less ill it were to die
Than live and look upon thy mother dead,
Thy mother-land that bare thee ; no man slain
But him who hath seen it shall men count un-
blest,

None blest as him who hath died and seen it
not.

CHTHONIA.

That sight some God keep from me though I
die.

PRAXITHEA.

A God from thee shall keep it ; fear not this.

CHTHONIA.

Thanks all my life long shall he gain of mine.

PRAXITHEA.

Short gain of all yet shall he get of thee.

CHTHONIA.

Brief be my life, yet so long live my thanks.

PRAXITHEA.

So long ? so little ; how long shall they live ?

CHTHONIA.

Even while I see the sunlight and thine eyes.

PRAXITHEA.

Would mine might shut ere thine upon the sun.

CHTHONIA.

For me thou prayest unkindly ; change that
prayer.

PRAXITHEA.

Not well for me thou sayest, and ill for thee.

CHTHONIA.

Nay, for me well, if thou shalt live, not I.

PRAXITHEA,

How live, and lose these loving looks of thine ?

CHTHONIA.

It seems I too, thus praying, then, love thee
not.

PRAXITHEA.

Lov'st thou not life ? what wouldst thou do to
die ?

CHTHONIA.

Well, but not more than all things, love I life.

PRAXITHEA.

And fain wouldst keep it as thine age allows ?

CHTHONIA.

Fain would I live, and fain not fear to die.

PRAXITHEA

That I might bid thee die not ! Peace ; no
more.

CHORUS.

A Godlike race of grief the Gods have set
For these to run matched equal, heart with
heart.

PRAXITHEA.

Child of the chief of Gods, and maiden
crowned,
Queen of these towers and foftrcss of their
king,
Pallas, and thou my father's holiest head,
A living well of life nor stanchcd nor stained,
O God Cephissus, thee too charge I next,
Be to me judge and witness ; nor thine ear
Shall now my tongue invoke not, thou to me
Most hateful of things holy, mournfullest
Of all old sacred streams that wash the world,
Ilissus, on whose marge at flowery play
A whirlwind-footed bridegroom found my
child
And rapt her northward where mine elder-born
Keeps now the Thracian bride-bed of a God
Intolerable to seamen, but this land
Finds him in hope for her sake favorable,
A gracious son by wedlock ; hear me then
Thou likewise, if with no faint heart or false
The word I say be said, the gift be given,
Which might I choose I had rather die than
give
Or speak and die not. Ere thy limbs were
made
Or thine eyes lightened strife, thou knowest,
my child,
'Twixt God and God had risen, which heaven-
lier name
Should here stand hallowed, whose more
liberal grace
Should win this city's worship, and our land
To which of these do reverence ; first the lord
Whose wheels make lightnings of the foam-
flowered sea
Here on this rock, whose height brow-bound
with dawn
Is head and heart of Athens, one sheer blow
Struck, and beneath the triple wound that
shook
The stony sinews and stark roots of the earth
Sprang toward the sun a sharp salt fount, and
sank
Where lying it lights the heart up of the hill,
A well of bright strange brine ; but she that
reared
Thy father with her same chaste fostering hand
Set for a sign against it in our guard
The holy bloom of the olive, whose hoar leaf
High in the shadowy shrine of Pandrosus
Hath honor of us all ; and of this strife
The twelve most high Gods judging with one
mouth

Acclaimed her vicitress ; wroth whereat, as
wronged
That she should hold from him such prize and
place,
The strong king of the tempest-rifted sea
Loosed reainless on the low Thriasian plain
The thunders of his chariots, swallowing
stunned
Earth, beasts, and men, the whole blind found-
ering world
That was the sun's at morning, and ere noon
Death's ; nor this only prey fulfilled his mind ;
For with strange crook-toothed prow of Carian
folk
Who snatch a sanguine life out of the sea,
Thieves keen to pluck their bloody fruit of
spoil
From the grey fruitless waters, has their God
Furrowed our shores to waste them, as the
fields
Were landward harried from the north with
swords
Aonian, sickles of man-slaughtering edge
Ground for no hopeful harvest of live grain
Against us in Borotia ; these being spent,
Now this third time his wind of wrath has
blown
Right on this people a mightier wave of war,
Three times more huge a ruin ; such its ridge
Foam-rimmed and hollow like the womb of
heaven,
But black for shining, and with death for life
Big now to birth and ripe with child, full-blown
With fear and fruit of havoc, takes the sun
Out of our eyes, darkening the day, and blinds
The fair sky's face unseasonably with change,
A cloud in one and billow of battle, a surge
High reared as heaven with monstrous surf of
spears
That shake on us their shadow, till men's heads
Bend, and their hearts even with its forward
wind
Wither, so blasts all seed in them of hope
Its breath, and blight of presage ; yea, even
now
The winter of this wind out of the deeps
Makes cold our trust in comfort of the Gods
And blind our eye toward outlook ; yet not
here,
Here never shall the Thracian plant on high
For ours his father's symbol, nor with wreaths
A strange folk wreathc it upright set and
crowned
Here where our natural people born behold
The golden Gorgon of the shield's defence

That screens their flowering olive, nor strange
 Gods

Be graced, and Pallas here have praise no
 more.

And if this be not I must give my child,
 Thee, mine own very blood and spirit of mine,
 Thee to be slain. Turn from me, turn thine
 eyes

A little from me ; I can bear not yet
 To see if still they smile on mine or no,
 If fear make faint the light in them, or faith
 Fix them as stars of safety. Need have we,
 Sore need of stars that set not in mid storm,
 Lights that outlast the lightnings ; yet my heart
 Endures not to make proof of thine or these,
 Not yet to know thee whom I made, and bare
 What manner of woman ; had I borne thee
 man,

I had made no question of thine eyes or heart,
 Nor spared to read the scriptures in them writ,
 Wert thou my son ; yet couldst thou then but
 die

Fallen in sheer fight by chance and charge of
 spears

And have no more of memory, fill no tomb
 More famous than thy fellows in fair field,
 Where many share the grave, many the praise ;
 But one crown shall one only girl my child
 Wear, dead for this dear city, and give back life
 To him that gave her and to me that bare,
 And save two sisters living ; and all this,
 Is this not all good ? I shall give thee, child,
 Thee but by fleshly nature mine, to bleed
 For dear land's love ; but if the city fall
 What part is left me in my children then ?
 But if it stand and thou for it lie dead,
 Then hast thou in it a better part than we,
 A holier portion than we all ; for each
 Hath but the length of his own life to live,
 And this most glorious mother-land on earth
 To worship till that life have end ; but thine
 Hath end no more than hers ; thou, dead,
 shalt live

Till Athens live not ; for the days and nights
 Given of thy bare brief dark individual life,
 Shall she give thee half all her age-long own
 And all its glory ; for thou givest her these ;
 But with one hand she takes and gives again
 More than I gave or she requires of thee.
 Come therefore, I will make thee fit for death,
 I that could give thee, dear, no gift at birth
 Save of light life that breathes and bleeds,
 even I

Will help thee to this better gift than mine
 And lead thee by this little living hand

That death shall make so strong, to that great
 end

Whence it shall lighten like a God's, and strike
 Dead the strong heart of battle that would
 break

Athens ; but ye, pray for this land, old men,
 That it may bring forth never child on earth
 To love it less, for none may more, than we.

CHORUS.

Out of the north wind grief came forth,
 And the shining of a sword out of the sea.
 Yea, of old the first-blown blast blew the
 prelude of this last,

The blast of his trumpet upon Rhodope.
 Out of the north skies full of his cloud,
 With the clamour of his storms as of a
 crowd

At the wheels of a great king crying aloud,
 At the axle of a strong king's car
 That has girded on the girdle of war—
 With hands that lightened the skies in sunder
 And feet whose fall was followed of thunder,

A God, a great God strange of name,
 With horse-yoke faster-hoofed than flame,
 To the mountain bed of a maiden came,
 Oreithyia, the bride mismated,
 Wofully wed in a snow-strewn bed
 With a bridegroom that kisses the bride's
 mouth dead ;

Without garland, without glory, without
 song,

As a fawn by night on the hills belated,
 Given over for a spoil unto the strong.

From lips how pale so keen a wail
 At the grasp of a God's hand on her she
 gave,

When his breath that darkens air made a
 havoc of her hair,

It rang from the mountain even to the
 wave ;

Rang with a cry, *Woe's me, woe is me !*
 From the darkness upon Hæmus to the sea :
 And with hands that clung to her new lord's
 knee,

As a virgin overborne with shame,
 She besought him by her spouseless fame,
 By the blameless breasts of a maid unmarri-
 ed

And locks unmaidenly rent and harried,
 And all her flower of body, born

To match the maidenhood of morn,
 With the might of the wind's wrath wrenched
 and torn.

Vain, all vain as a dead man's vision
 Falling by night in his old friends' sight,
 To be scattered with slumber and slain ere
 light ;
 Such a breath of such a bridegroom in that
 hour
 Of her prayers made mock, of her fears
 derision,
 And a ravage of her youth as of a flower.
 With a leap of his limbs as a lion's, a cry from
 his lips as of thunder,
 In a storm of amorous godhead filled with
 fire,
 From the height of the heaven that was rent
 with the roar of his coming in sunder,
 Sprang the strong God on the spoil of his
 desire.
 And the pines of the hills were as green
 reeds shattered,
 And their branches as buds of the soft spring
 scattered,
 And the west wind and east, and the sound
 of the south,
 Fell dumb at the blast of the north wind's
 mouth,
 At the cry of his coming out of heaven.
 And the wild beasts quailed in the rifts and
 hollows
 Where hound nor clarion of huntsman fol-
 lows,
 And the depths of the sea were aghast, and
 whitened,
 And the crowns of their waves were as flame
 that lightened,
 And the heart of the floods thereof was
 riven.
 But she knew not him coming for terror, she
 felt not her wrong that he wrought her,
 When her locks as leaves were shed before
 his breath,
 And she heard not for terror his prayer,
 though the cry was a God's that besought
 her,
 Blown from lips that strew the world-wide
 seas with death.
 For the heart was molten within her to hear,
 And her knees beneath her were loosened
 for fear,
 And her blood fast bound as a frost-bound
 water,
 And the soft new bloom of the green earth's
 daughter
 Wind-wasted as blossom of a tree ;
 As the wild God rapt her from earth's breast
 lifted,

On the strength of the stream of his dark
 breath drifted,
 From the bosom of earth as a bride from the
 mother,
 With storm for bridesman and wreck for
 brother,
 As a cloud that he sheds upon the sea.
 Of this hoary-headed woe
 Song made memory long ago ;
 Now a younger grief to mourn
 Needs a new song younger born.
 Who shall teach our tongues to reach
 What strange height of saddest speech,
 For the new bride's sake that is given to be
 A stay to fetter the foot of the sea,
 Lest it quite spurn down and trample the town,
 Ere the violets be dead that were plucked for
 its crown,
 Or its olive-leaf whiten and wither ?
 Who shall say of the wind's way
 That he journeyed yesterday,
 Or the track of the storm that shall sound to-
 morrow,
 If the new be more than the grey-grown
 sorrow ?
 For the wind of the green first season
 was keen,
 And the blast shall be sharper that blew
 between
 That the breath of the sea blows hither.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

Old men, grey borderers on the march of death,
 Tongue-fighters, tough of talk and sinewy
 speech,
 Else nerveless, from no crew of such faint folk
 Whose tongues are stouter than their hands
 come I
 To bid not you to battle ; let them strike
 Whose swords are sharper than your keen-
 tongued wail,
 And ye, sit fast and sorrow ; but what man
 Of all this land-folk and earth laboring herd
 For heart or hand seems foremost, him I call
 If heart be his to hearken, him bid forth
 To try if one be in the sun's sight born
 Of all that grope and grovel on dry ground
 That may join hands in battle-grip for death
 With them whose seed and strength is of the
 sea.

CHORUS.

Know thou this much for all thy loud blast
 blown,

We lack not hands to speak with, swords to
plead,
For proof of peril, not of boisterous breath,
Sea-wind and storm of barren mouths that
foam
And rough rock's edge of menace ; and short
space
May lessen thy large ignorance and inform
This insolence with knowledge if there live
Men earth-begotten of no tenderer thews
Than knit the great joints of the grim sea's
brood
With hasps of steel together ; heaven to help,
One man shall break, even on their own flood's
verge,
That iron bulk of battle ; but thine eye
That sees it now swell higher than sand or
shore
Haply shall see not when thine host shall
shrink.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

Not haply, nay, but surely, shall not thine.

CHORUS.

That lot shall no God give who fights for thee.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

Shall Gods bear bit and bridle, fool, of men ?

CHORUS.

Nor them forbid we nor shalt thou constrain.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

Yet say'st thou none shall make the good lot
mine ?

CHORUS.

Of thy side none, nor moved for fear of thee.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

Gods hast thou then to baffle Gods of ours ?

CHORUS.

Nor thine nor mine, but equal-souled are they.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

Toward good and ill, then, equal-eyed of soul ?

CHORUS.

Nay, but swift-eyed to note where ill thoughts
breed.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

Thy shaft word-feathered flies yet far of me.

CHORUS.

Pride knows not, wounded, till the heart be
cleft.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

No shaft wounds deep whose wing is plumed
with words.

CHORUS.

Lay that to heart, and bid thy tongue learn grace.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

Grace shall thine own crave soon too late of
mine.

CHORUS

Boast thou till then, but I wage words no more.

ERECOTHEUS.

Man, what shrill wind of speech and wrangling
air
Blows in our ears a summons from thy lips
Winged with what message, or what gift or
grace
Requiring ? none but what his hand may take
Here may the foe think hence to reap, nor this
Except some doom from Godward yield it him.

HERALD OF EUMOLPUS.

King of this land-folk, by my mouth to thee
Thus saith the son of him that shakes thine earth
Eumolpus ; now the stakes of war are set,
For land or sea to win by throw and wear ;
Choose therefore or to quit thy side and give
The palm unfought for to his bloodless hand.

Or by that father's sceptre; and the foot
Whose tramp far off makes tremble for pure
fear

Thy soul-struck mother, piercing like a sword
The immortal womb that bare thee ; by the
waves

That no man bridles and that bound thy world,
And by the winds and storms of all the sea,
He swears to raze from eyeshot of the sun
This city named not of his father's name,
And wash to deathward down one flood of doom
This whole fresh brood of earth yearned natural-
ly,

Green yet and faint in its first blade, unblown
With yellow hope of harvest ; so do thou,
Seeing whom thy time is come to meet, for fear
Yield, or gird up thy force to fight and die.

ERECHTHEUS.

To fight then be it ; for if to die or live,
No man but only a God knows this much yet
Seeing us fare forth, who bear but in our hands
The weapons not the fortunes of our fight ;
For these now rest as lots that yet undrawn
Lie in the lap of the unknown hour ; but this
I know, not thou, whose hollow mouth of
storm

Is but a warlike wind, a sharp salt breath
That bites and wounds not ; death nor life of
mine

Shall give to death or lordship of strange kings
The soul of this live city, nor their heel
Bruise her dear brow discrowned, nor snaffle
or good

Wound her free mouth or stain her sanguine
side

Yet masterless of man ; so bid thy lord
Learn ere he weep to learn it, and too late
Gnash teeth that could not fasten on her flesh,
And foam his life out in dark froth of blood
Vain as a wind's waif of the loud-mouthed sea
Torn from the wave's edge whitening. Tell
him this ;

Though thrice his might were mustered for
our scathe

And thicker set with fence of thorn-edged
spears

Than sands are whirled about the wintering
beach

When storms have swoln the rivers, and their
blasts

I have breached the broad sea-banks with stress
of sea,

That waves of inland and the main make war

As men that mix and grapple ; though his
ranks

Were more to number than all wildwood
leaves

The wind waves on the hills of all the world,
Yet should the heart not faint, the head not
fall,

The breath not fail of Athens. Say, the Gods
From lips that have no more on earth to say
I have told thee this the last good news or ill
That I shall speak in sight of earth and sun
Or he shall hear and see them : for the next
That ear of his from tongue of mine may take
Must be the first word spoken underground
From dead to dead in darkness. Hence ; make
haste,

Lest war's fleet foot be swifter than thy tongue
And I that part not to return again
On him that comes not to depart away
Be fallen before thee ; for the time is full,
And with such mortal hope as knows not fear
I go this high last way to the end of all.

CHORUS.

Who shall put a bridle in the mourner's lips to
chasten them,

Or seal up the fountains of his tears for
shame ?

Song nor prayer nor prophecy shall slacken
tears nor hasten them,

Till grief be within him as a burnt-out flame ;
Till the passion be broken in his breast

And the might thereof molten into rest,
And the rain of eyes that weep be dry,

And the breath be stilled of lips that sigh.
Death at last for all men is a harbor ; yet they
flee from it,

Set sails to the storm-wind and again to sea ;
Yet for all their labor no whit further shall they
be from it,

Nor longer but wearier shall their life's work
be.

And with anguish of travail until night
Shall they steer into shipwreck out of
sight,

And with oars that break and shrouds that
strain

Shall they drive whence no ship steers
again.

Bitter and strange is the word of the God most
high,

And steep the strait of his way.
Through a pass rock-rimmed and narrow the
light that gleams

On the faces of men falls faint as the dawn of dreams,
 The dayspring of death as a star in an under sky
 Where night is the dead men's day.
 As darkness and storm is his will that on earth is done,
 As a cloud is the face of his strength.
 King of kings, holiest of holies, and mightiest of might,
 Lord of the lords of thine heaven that are humble in thy sight,
 Hast thou set not an end for the path of the fires of the sun,
 To appoint him a rest at length?
 Hast thou told not by measure the waves of the waste wide sea,
 And the ways of the wind their master and thrall to thee?
 Hast thou filled not the furrows with fruit for the world's increase?
 Has thine ear not heard from of old or thine eye not read
 The thought and the deed of us living, the doom of us dead?
 Hast thou made not war upon earth, and again made peace?
 Therefore, O father, that seest us whose lives are a breath,
 Take off us thy burden, and give us not wholly to death.
 For lovely is life, and the law wherein all things live,
 And gracious the season of each, and the hour of its kind,
 And precious the seed of his life in a wise man's mind;
 But all save life for his life will a base man give.
 But a life that is given for the life of the whole live land,
 From a heart unspotted a gift of a spotless hand,
 Of pure will perfect and free, for the land's life's sake,
 What man shall fear not to put forth his hand and take?
 For the fruit of a sweet life plucked in its pure green prime
 On his hand who plucks is as blood, on his soul as crime.
 With cursing ye buy not blessing, nor peace with strife,
 And the hand is hateful that chaffers with death for life.
 Hast thou heard, O my heart, and endurest

The word that is said,
 What a garland by sentence found surest
 Is wrought for what head?
 With what blossomless flowerage of sea-foam and blood-colored foliage inwound
 It shall crown as a heifer's for slaughter the forehead for marriage uncrowned?
 How the veils and the wreaths that should cover
 The brows of the bride
 Shall be shed by the breath of what lover
 And scattered aside?
 With a blast of the mouth of what bridegroom the crowns shall be cast from her hair,
 And her head by what altar made humble be left of them naked and bare?
 At a shrine unbeloved of a God unbeholden a gift shall be given for the land,
 That its ramparts though shaken with clamor and horror of manifold waters may stand:
 That the crests of its citadels crowned and its turrets that thrust up their heads to the sun
 May behold him unblinded with darkness of waves overmastering their bulwarks begun.
 As a bride shall they bring her, a prey for the bridegroom, a flower for the couch of her lord;
 They shall muffle her mouth that she cry not or curse them, and cover her eyes from the sword.
 They shall fasten her lips as with bit and with bridle, and darken the light of her face,
 That the soul of the slayer may not falter, his heart be not molten, his hand give not grace.
 If she weep then, yet may none that hear take pity;
 If she cry not, none should hearken though she cried.
 Shall a virgin shield thine head for love, O city,
 With a virgin's blood anointed as for pride?
 Yet we held thee dear and hallowed of her favor,
 Dear of all men held thy people to her heart;
 Nought she loves the breath of blood, the sanguine savour,
 Who hath built with us her throne and chosen her part.
 Bloodless are her works, and sweet
 All the ways that feel her feet;
 From the empire of her eyes
 Light takes life and darkness flies;
 From the harvest of her hands

Wealth strikes root in prosperous lands ;
 Wisdom of her word is made ;
 At her strength is strength afraid ;
 From the beam of her bright spear
 War's fleet foot goes back for fear ;
 In her shrine she reared the birth
 Fire-begotten on live earth ;
 Glory from her helm was shed
 On his olive-shadowed head ;
 By no hand but his shall she
 Scourge the storms back of the sea,
 To no fame but his shall give
 Grace, being dead, with hers to live,
 And in double name divine
 Half the godhead of their shrine.

But now with what word, with what woe may
 we meet

The timeless passage of piteous feet,
 Hither that bend to the last way's end
 They shall walk upon earth ?

What song be rolled for a bride black-stoled
 And the mother whose hand of her hand hath
 hold ?

For anguish of heart is my soul's strength
 broken

And the tongue sealed fast that would fain have
 spoken,

To behold thee, O child of so bitter a birth

That we counted so sweet,

What way thy steps to what bride-feast tend,
 What gift he must give that shall wed thee for
 token

If the bridegroom be goodly to greet.

CHTHONIA.

People, old men of my city, lordly wise and
 hoar of head,

I a spouseless bride and crownless but with
 garlands of the dead

From the fruitful light turn silent to my dark
 unchilded bed.

CHORUS.

Wise of word was he too surely, but with
 deadlier wisdom wise,

First who gave thee name from under earth,
 no breath from upper skies,

When foredoomed to this day's darkness, their
 first daylight filled thine eyes.

PRAXITHEA.

Child, my child that wast and art but death's
 and now no more of mine,

Half my heart is cloven with anguish by the
 sword made sharp for thine,
 Half exalts its wing for triumph, that 'I bare
 thee thus divine.

CHTHONIA.

Though for me the sword's edge thirst that sets
 no point against thy breast,

Mother, O my mother, where I drank of life
 and fell on rest,

Thine, not mine, is all the grief that marks
 this hour accurst and blest.

CHORUS.

Sweet thy sleep and sweet the bosom was that
 gave thee sleep and birth ;

Harder now the breast, and girded with no
 marriage-band for girth,

Where thine head shall sleep, the namechild
 of the lords of under earth.

PRAXITHEA.

Dark the name and dark the gifts they gave
 thee, child, in childbirth were,

Sprung from him that rent the womb of earth,
 a bitter seed to bear,

Born with groanings of the ground that gave
 him way toward heaven's dear air.

CHTHONIA.

Day to day makes answer, first to last, and life
 to death ; but I,

Born for death's sake, die for life's sake, if in-
 deed this be to die,

This my doom that seals me deathless till the
 springs of time run dry.

CHORUS.

Children shalt thou bear to memory, that to
 man shalt bring forth none ;

Yea, the lordliest that lift eyes and hearts and
 songs to meet the sun,

Names to fire men's ears like music till the
 round world's race be run.

PRAXITHEA.

I thy mother, named of Gods that wreak re-
 venge and brand with blame,

Now for thy love shall be loved as thou, and
famous with thy fame,
While this city's name on earth shall be for
earth her mightiest name.

CHTHONIA.

That I may give this poor girl's blood of mine
Scarce yet sun-warmed with summer, this thin
life

Still green with flowerless growth of seedling
days,

To build again my city; that no drop
Fallen of these innocent veins on the cold
ground

But shall help to knit the joints of her firm walls
To knead the stones together, and make sure
The band about her maiden girdlestead
Once fastened, and of all men's violent hands
Inviolable for ever; these to me

Were no such gifts as crave no thanksgiving,
If with one blow dividing the sheer life
I might make end, and one pang wind up all
And seal mine eyes from sorrow; for such end
The Gods give none they love not; but my heart,
That leaps up lightened of all sloth or fear
To take the sword's point, yet with one
thought's load

Flags, and falls back, broken of wing, that
halts

Maimed in mid flight for thy sake and borne
down,

Mother, that in the places where I played
An arm's length from thy bosom and no more
Shalt find me never, nor thine eye wax glad
To mix with mine its eyesight and for love
Laugh without word, filled with sweet light,
and speak

Divine dumb things of the inward spirit and
heart,

Moved silently; nor hand or lip again
Touch hand or lid of either, but for mine
Shall thine meet only shadows of swift night,
Dreams and dead thoughts of dead things; and
the bed

Thou strewedst, a sterile place for all time,
strewn

For my sleep only, with its void sad sheets
Shall vex thee, and the unfruitful coverlid
For empty days reproach me dead, that leave
No profit of my body, but am gone
As one not worth being born to bear no seed,
A sapless stock and branchless: yet thy womb
Shall want no honor of me, that brought forth
For all this people freedom, and for earth

From the unborn city born out of my blood
To light the face of all men evermore
Glory; but lay thou this to thy great heart
Whereunder in the dark of birth conceived
Mine unlit life lay girdled with the zone
That bound thy bridal bosom; set this thought
Against all edge of evil as a sword
To beat back sorrow, that for all the world
Thou brought'st me forth a saviour, who shall
save

Athens; for none but I from none but thee
Shall take this death for garland; and the men
Mine unknown children of unsounded years,
My sons unrisen shall rise up at thine hand,
Sown of thy seed to bring forth seed to thee,
And call thee most of all most fruitful found
Blessed; but me too for my barren womb
More than my sisters for their children born
Shall these give honor, yea in scorn's own
place

Shall men set love and bring for mockery
praise

And thanks for curses; for the dry wild vine
Scoffed at and cursed of all men that was I
Shall shed them wine to make the world's heart
warm,

That all eyes seeing may lighten, and all ears
Hear and be kindled; such a draught to drink
Shall be the blood that bids this dust bring
forth,

The chalice life here spilt on this mine earth,
Mine, my great father's mother; whom I pray
Take me now gently, tenderly take home,
And softly lay in his my cold chaste hand
Who is called of men by my name, being of
Goxis

Charged only and chosen to bring men under
earth,

And now must lead and stay me with his staff
A silent soul led of a silent God,
Toward sightless things led sightless; and on
earth

I see now but the shadow of mine end,
And this last light of all for me in heaven.

PRAXITHEA.

Farewell I bid thee; so bid thou not me,
Lest the Gods hear and mock us; yet on these
I lay the weight not of this grief, nor cast
Ill words for ill deeds back; for if one say
They have done men wrong, what hurt have
they to hear,
Or he what help to have said it? surely, child,
If one among men born might say it and live

Blameless, none more than I may, who being
 vexed
 Hold yet my peace; for now through tears
 enough
 Mine eyes have seen the sun that from this day
 Thine shall see never more; and in the night
 Enough has blown of evil, and mine ears
 With wail enough the winds have filled, and
 brought
 Too much of cloud from over the sharp sea
 To mar for me the morning; such a blast
 Rent from these wide void arms and helpless
 breast
 Long since one graft of me disbranched, and
 bore
 Beyond the wild ways of the unwandered
 world
 And loud wastes of the thunder-throated sea,
 Springs of the night and openings of the
 heaven,
 The old garden of the Sun; whence never
 more
 From west or east shall winds bring back that
 blow
 From folds of opening heaven or founts of
 night
 The flower of mine once ravished, born my
 child
 To bear strange children; nor on wings of
 theirs
 Shall comfort come back to me, nor their sire
 Breathe help upon my peril, nor his strength
 Raise up my weakness; but of Gods and men
 I drift unsteered on ruin, and the wave
 Darkens my head with imminent height, and
 hangs
 Dumb, filled too full with thunder that shall
 leave
 These ears death-deafened when the tide finds
 tongue
 And all its wrath bears on them; thee, O child,
 I help not, nor am holpen; fain, ah fain,
 More than was ever mother born of man,
 Were I to help thee; fain beyond all prayer,
 Beyond all thought fain to redeem thee, torn
 More timeless from me sorrowing than the
 dream
 That was thy sister; so shalt thou be too,
 Thou but a vision, shadow-shaped of sleep,
 By grief made out of nothing; now but once
 I touch, but once more hold thee, one more
 kiss
 This last time and none other ever more
 Leave on thy lips and leave them. Go; thou
 wast

My heart, my heart's blood, life-blood of my
 life,
 My child, my nursling; now this breast once
 thine
 Shall rear again no children; never now
 Shall any mortal blossom born like thee
 Lie there, nor ever with small silent mouth
 Draw the sweet springs dry for an hour that
 feed
 The blind blithe life that knows not; never
 head
 Rest here to make these cold veins warm, nor eyes
 Laugh itself open with the lips that reach
 Lovingly toward a fount more loving; these
 Death makes as all good lesser things now
 dead,
 And all the latter hopes that flowered from
 these
 And fall as these fell fruitless; no joy more
 Shall man take of thy maidenhood, no tongue
 Praise it; no good shall eyes get more of thee
 That lightened for thy love's sake. Now, take
 note,
 Give ear, O all ye people, that my word
 May pierce your hearts through, and the stroke
 that cleaves
 Be fruitful to them; so shall all that hear
 Grow great at heart with child of thought most
 high
 And bring forth seed in season; this my child,
 This flower of this my body, this sweet life,
 This fair live youth I give you, to be slain,
 Spent, shed, poured out, and perish; take my
 gift
 And give it death and the under Gods who
 crave
 So much for that they give; for this is more,
 Much more is this than all we; for they give
 Freedom, and for a blast, an air of breath,
 A little soul that is not, they give back
 Light for all eyes, cheer for all hearts, and life
 That fills the world's width full of fame and
 praise
 And mightier love than children's. This they
 give,
 The grace to make thy country great, and
 wrest
 From time and death power to take hold on
 her
 And strength to scathe for ever; and this gift,
 Is this no more than man's love is or mine,
 Mine and all mothers? nay, where that seems
 more,
 Where one loves life of child, wife, father,
 friend,

Son, husband, mother, more than this, even there

Are all these lives worth nothing, all loves else
With this love slain and buried, and their tomb
A thing for shame to spit on ; for what love
Hath a slave left to love with ? or the heart
Base-born and bound in bondage fast to fear,
What should it do to love thee ? what hath he,
The man that hath no country ? Gods nor men
Have such to friend, yoked beast-like to base
life,

Vile, fruitless, grovelling at the foot of death,
Landless and kinless thralls of no man's blood,
Unchilded and unmothered, abject limbs
That breed things abject ; but who loves on
earth

Not friend, wife, husband, father, mother, child,
Nor loves his own life for his own land's sake,
But only this thing most, more than than all,
He loves all well and well of all is loved,
And this love lives for ever. See now, friends,
My countrymen, my brothers, with what heart
I give you this that of your hands again
The Gods require for Athens ; as I give
So give ye to them what their hearts would have
Who shall give back things better, yea, and these
I take for me to witness, all these Gods,
Were their great will more grievous than it is,
Not one but three, for this one thin-spun thread
A threefold band of children would I give
For this land's love's sake ; for whose love to-
day

I bid thee, child, fare deathward and farewell.

CHORUS.

O wofullest of women, yet of all
Happiest, thy word be hallowed ; in all time
Thy name shall blossom, and from strange new
tongues

High things be spoken of thee ; for such grace
The Gods have dealt to no man, that on none
Have laid so heavy sorrow. From this day
Live thou assured of godhead in thy blood,
And in thy fate no lowlier than a God
In all good things and evil ; such a name
Shall be thy child this city's and thine own.
Next hers that called it Athens. Go now
forth

Blest, and grace with thee to the doors of
death.

CHTHONIA.

O city, O glory of Athens, O crown of my
father's land, farewell

CHORUS.

For welfare is given her of thee.

CHTHONIA.

O Goddess, be good to thy people, that in
them dominion and freedom may dwell.

CHORUS.

Turn from us the strengths of the sea.

CHTHONIA.

Let glory's and theirs be one name in the
mouths of all nations made glad with the
sun.

CHORUS.

For the cloud is blown back with thy breath.

CHTHONIA.

With the long last love of mine eyes I sal-
ute thee, O land where my days now
are done.

CHORUS.

But her life shall be born of thy death.

CHTHONIA.

I put on me the darkness thy shadow, my
mother, and symbol, O Earth, of my
name.

CHORUS.

For thine was her witness from birth.

CHTHONIA.

In thy likeness I come to thee darkling, a
daughter whose dawn and her even are
the same.

CHORUS.

Be thine heart to her gracious, O Earth.

CHTHONIA.

To thine own kind be kindly, for thy son's
name's sake.

CHORUS.

That sons unborn may praise thee and thy
first-born son.

CHTHONIA.

Give me thy sleep, who give thee all my
life awake.

CHORUS.

Too swift a sleep, ere half the web of day
be spun.

CHTHONIA.

Death brings the shears or ever life wind up
the web.

CHORUS.

Their edge is ground and sharpened ; who
shall stay his hand ?

CHTHONIA.

The woof is thin, a small short life, with no
thread left.

CHORUS.

Yet hath it strength, stretched out, to shel-
ter all the land.

CHTHONIA.

Too frail a tent for covering, and a screen
too strait.

CHORUS.

Yet broad enough for buckler shall thy sweet
life be.

CHTHONIA.

A little bolt to bar off battle from the gate.

CHORUS.

A wide sea-wall, that shatters the besieging
sea.

CHTHONIA.

I lift up mine eyes from the skirts of the
shadow,
From the border of death to the limits of
light ;
O streams and rivers of mountain and meadow
That hallow the last of my sight,
O father that wast of my mother
Cephisus, O thou too his brother
From the bloom of whose banks as a prey
Winds harried my sister away,
O crown on the world's head lying
Too high for its waters to drown,
Take yet this one word of me dying,
O city, O crown.

Though land-wind and sea-wind with mouths
that blow slaughter
Should gird them to battle against thee again,
New-born of the blood of a maiden thy daugh-
ter,
The rage of their breath shall be vain.
For their strength shall be quenched and
made idle,
And the foam of their mouths find a
bridle,
And the height of their heads bow down
At the foot of the towers of the town.
Be blest and beloved as I love thee
Of all that shall draw from thee breath ;
Be thy life as the sun's is above thee ;
I go to my death.

CHORUS.

Many loves of many a mood and many a
kind
Fill the life of man, and mould the secret
mind ;
Many days bring many dooms, to loose and
bind ;
Sweet in each in season, good the gift it
brings,
Sweet as change of night and day with alter-
ing wings,
Night that lulls world-weary day, day that com-
forts night,
Night that fills our eyes with sleep, day that
fills with light.
None of all is lovelier, loftier love is none,
Less is bride's for bridegroom, mother's less
for son,
Child, than this that crowns and binds up
all in one ;

Love of thy sweet light, thy fostering breast
 and hand,
 Mother Earth, and city chosen, and natural land ;
 Hills that bring the strong streams forth,
 heights of heavenlier air,
 Fields afloer with winds and suns, woods
 with shadowing hair.
 But none of the nations of men shall they liken
 to thee,
 Whose children true-born and the fruit of thy
 body are we.
 The rests are thy sons but in figure, in word
 are thy seed ;
 We only the flower of thy travail, thy children
 indeed.
 Of thy soil hast thou fashioned our limbs, of
 thy waters their blood,
 And the life of thy springs everlasting is
 fount of our flood.
 No wind oversea blew us hither adrift on thy
 shore,
 None sowed us by land in thy womb that con-
 ceived us and bore.
 But the stroke of the shaft of the sunlight that
 brought us to birth
 Pierced only and quickened thy furrows to bear
 us, O Earth.
 With the beams of his love wast thou cloven
 as with iron or fire,
 And the life in thee yearned for his life, and
 grew great with desire.
 And the hunger and thirst to be wounded and
 healed with his dart
 Made fruitful the love in thy veins and the
 depth of thine heart.
 And the showers out of heaven overflowing
 and liquid with love
 Fulfilled thee with child of his godhead as rain
 from above.
 Such desire had ye twain of each other, till
 molten in one
 Ye might bear and beget of your bodies the
 fruits of the sun.
 And the trees in their season brought forth and
 were kindled anew
 By the warmth of the moisture of marriage,
 the child-bearing dew.
 And the firstlings were fair of the wedlock of
 heaven and of earth ;
 All countries were bounteous with blossom and
 burgeon of birth,
 Green pastures of grass for all cattle, and life-
 giving corn ;
 But here of thy bosom, here only, the man-
 child was born.

All races but one are as aliens engrafted or
 sown,
 Strange children and changelings ; but we, O
 our mother, thine own.
 Thy nurslings are others, and seedlings they
 know not of whom ;
 For these hast thou fostered, but us thou hast
 borne in thy womb.
 Who is he of us all, O beloved, that owe thee
 for birth,
 Who would give not his blood for his birth's
 sake, O mother, O Earth ?
 What landsman is he that was fostered and
 reared of thine hand
 Who may vaunt him as we may in death
 though he die for the land ?
 Well doth she therefore who gives thee
 guerdon
 The bloom of the life of thy giving ;
 And thy body was bowed by no fruitless burden,
 That bore such fruit of thee living.
 For her face was not darkened for fear,
 For her eyelids conceived not a tear,
 Nor a cry from her lips craved pity ;
 But her mouth was a fountain of song,
 And her heart as a citadel strong
 That guards the heart of the city.

MESSENGER.

High things of strong-souled men that loved
 their land
 On brass and stone are written, and their deeds
 On high days chanted ; but none graven or
 sung
 That ever set men's eyes or spirits on fire,
 Athenians, has the sun's height seen, or earth
 Heard in her depth reverberate as from heaven,
 More worth men's praise and good report of
 Gods
 Than here I bring for record in your ears.
 For now being come to the altar, where as
 priest
 Death ministering should meet her, and his
 hand
 Seal her sweet eyes asleep, the maiden stood,
 With light in all her face as of a bride
 Smiling, or shine of festal flame by night
 Far flung from towers of triumph ; and her
 lips
 Trembled with pride in pleasure, that no fear
 Blanched them nor death before his time drank
 dry
 The blood whose bloom fulfilled them ; for her
 cheeks

Lightened, and brighter than a bridal veil
Her hair enrobed her bosom and enrolled
From face to feet the body's whole soft length
As with a cloud sun-saturate ; then she spake
With maiden tongue words manlike, but her
eyes

Lit mildly like a maiden's : *Countrymen,
With more goodwill and height of happier
heart*

*I give me to you than my mother bare,
And go more gladly this great way to death
Than young men bound to battle.* Then with
face

Turned to the the shadowiest part of all the
shrine

And eyes fast set upon the further shade,
Take me, dear Gods ; and as some form had
shone

From the deep hollow shadow, some God's
tongue

Answered, *I bless you that your guardian grace
Gives me to guard this country, takes my blood,
Your child's by name, to heal it.* Then the
priest

Set to the flower-sweet snow of her soft throat
The sheer knife's edge that severed it, and
loosed

From the fair bondage of so spotless flesh
So strong a spirit ; and all that girt them
round

Gazing, with souls that hung on that sad
stroke,

Groaned, and kept silence after while a man
Might count how far the fresh blood crept, and
bathed

How deep the dark robe and the bright shrine's
base

Red-rounded with a running ring that grew
More large and dusker as the wells that fed
Were drained of that pure effluence : but the
queen

Groaned not nor spake nor wept, but as a dream
Floats out of eyes awakening so past forth
Ghost-like, a shadow of sorrow, from all sight
To the inner court and chamber where she sits
Dumb, till word reach her of this whole day's
end.

CHORUS.

More hapless born by far
Beneath some wintrier star,
One sits in stone among high Lydian snows,
The tomb of her own woes :
Yet happiest was once of the daughters of

Gods, and divine by her sire and her lord,
Ere her tongue was a shaft for the hearts of her
sons, for the heart of her husband a sword.

For she, too great of mind,
Grown through her good things blind,
With goodless lips and fire of her own breath
Spake all her house to death ;

But thou, no mother unmothered, nor kindled
in spirit with pride of thy seed,

Thou hast hallowed thy child for a blameless
blood-offering, and ransomed thy race by
thy deed.

MESSENGER.

As flower is grafted on flower, so grief on grief
Engrafted brings forth new blossoms of strange
tears,

Fresh buds and green fruits of an alien pain ;
For now flies rumor on a dark wide wing,
Murmuring of woes more than ye knew, most
like

Hers whom ye hailed most wretched ; for the
twain

Last left of all this house that wore last night
A threefold crown of maidens, and to-day
Should let but one fall dead out of the wreath,
If mad with grief we know not and sore love
For this their sister, or with shame soul-stung
To outlive her dead or doubt lest their lives too
The Gods require to seal their country safe
And bring the oracular doom to perfect end,
Have slain themselves, and fallen at the altar-
foot

Lie by their own hands done to death ; and
fear

Shakes all the city as winds a wintering tree,
And as dead leaves are men's hearts blown
about

And shrunken with ill thoughts, and flowerless
hopes

Parched up with presage, lest the piteous blood
Shed of these maidens guiltless fall and fix
On this land's forehead like a curse that cleaves
To the unclean soul's inextinguishable head
Whom his own crime tracks hotlier than a
hound

To life's veiled end unsleeping ; and this hour
Now blackens toward the battle that must close
All gates of hope and fear on all their hearts
Who tremble toward its issue, knowing not yet
If blood may buy them surety, cleanse or soil
The helpless hands men raise and reach no stay.

CHORUS.

Ill thoughts breed fear, and fear ill words ; but
these
The Gods turn from us that have kept their
law.
Let us lift up the strength of our hearts in
song,
And our souls to the height of the darkling
day.
If the wind in our eyes blow blood for
spray,
Be the spirit that breathes in us life more
strong,
Though the prow reel round and the helm
point wrong,
And sharp reefs whiten the shoreward way.
For the steersman time sits hidden astern,
With dark hand plying the rudder of doom,
And the surf-smoke under it flies like fume
As the blast shears off and the oar-blades
churn
The foam of our lives that to death return,
Blown back as they break to the gulping
gloom.
What cloud upon heaven is arisen, what
shadow, what sound,
From the world beyond earth, from the
night underground,
That scatters from wings unbeholden the weight
of its darkness around ?
For the sense of my spirit is broken, and
blinded its eye,
As the soul of a sick man ready to die,
With fear of the hour that is on me, with dread
if an end be not nigh.
O Eearth, O Gods of the land, have ye
heart now to see and to hear
What slays with terror mine eyesight and
seals mine ear ?
O fountains of streams everlasting, are all ye
not shrunk up and withered for fear ?
Lo, night is arisen on the noon, and her
hounds are in quest by day,
And the world is fulfilled of the noise of
them crying for their prey,
And the sun's self stricken in heaven, and cast
out of his course as a blind man astray.
From east to west of the south sea-line
Glitters the lightning of spears that shine ;
As a storm-cloud swoln that comes up from the
skirts of the sea
By the wind for helmsman to shoreward
ferried,

So black behind them the live storm serried
Shakes earth with the tramp of its foot, and
the terror to be.
Shall the sea give death whom the land gave
birth ?
O Earth, fair mother, O sweet live Earth,
Hide us again in thy womb from the waves of
it, help us or hide.
As a sword is the heart of the God thy brother,
But thine as the heart of a new-made mother
To deliver thy sons from his ravin, and rage of
his tide.
O strong north wind, the pilot of cloud and
rain,
For the gift we gave thee what gift hast thou
given us again ?
O God dark-winged, deep-throated, a terror to
forth-faring ships by night,
What bride-song is this that is blown on the
blast of thy breath ?
A gift but of grief to thy kinsmen, a song but
of death,
For the bride's folk weeping, and woe for her
father, who finds thee against him in fight.
Turn back from us, turn thy battle, take heed
of our cry ;
Let thy dread breath sound, and the waters
of war be dry ;
Let thy strong wrath shatter the strength of foe-
men, the sword of their strength and the
shield ;
As vapors in heaven, or as waves or the
wrecks of ships,
So break thou the ranks of their spears
with the breath of thy lips,
Till their corpses have covered and clothed as
with raiment the face of the sword-plough-
ed field.
O son of the rose-red morning, O God twin-
born with the day,
O wind with the young sun waking, and
winged for the same wide way,
Give up not the house of thy kin to the host
thou hast marshalled from northward for prey.
From the cold of thy cradle in Thrace, from
the mists of the fountains of night,
From the bride-bed of dawn whence day
leaps laughing, on fire for his flight,
Come down with their doom in thine hand on
the ships thou hast brought up against us
to fight.
For now not in word but in deed is the harvest
of spears begun,
And its clamour outbellows the thunder, its
lightning outlightens the sun.

From the springs of the morning it thunders
and lightens across and afar

To the wave where the moonset ends and the
fall of the last low star.

With a trampling of drenched red hoofs and
an earthquake of men that meet,

Strong war sets hand to the scythe, and the
furrows take fire from his feet.

Earth groans from her great rent heart, and
the hollows of rocks are afraid,

And the mountains are moved, and the valleys
as waves in a storm-wind swayed.

From the roots of the hills to the plain's dim
verge and the dark loud shore,

Air shudders with shrill spears crossing, and
hurling of wheels that roar.

As the grinding of teeth in the jaws of a lion
that foam as they gnash

Is the shriek of the axles that loosen, the shock
of the poles that crash.

The dense manes darken and glitter, the
mouths of the mad steeds champ,

Their heads flash blind through the battle,
and death's foot rings in their tramp.

For a fourfold host upon earth and in heaven
is arrayed for the fight,

Clouds ruining in thunder and armies encount-
ering as clouds in the night.

Mine ears are amazed with the terror of trum-
pets, with darkness mine eyes,

At the sound of the sea's host charging that
deafens the roar of the sky's.

White frontlet is dashed upon frontlet, and
horse against horse reels hurled,

And the gorge of the gulfs of the battle is wide
for the spoil of the world.

And the meadows are cumbered with shipwreck
of chariots that founder on land,

And the horsemen are broken with breach as
of breakers, and scattered as sand.

Through the roar and recoil of the charges
that mingle their cries and confound,

Like fire are the notes of the trumpets that
flash through the darkness of sound.

As the swing of the sea churned yellow that
sways with the wind as it swells

Is the lift and relapse of the wave of the char-
gers that clash with their bells ;

And the clang of the sharp shrill brass through
the burst of the wave as it shocks

Rings clean as the clear wind's cry through
the roar of the surge on the rocks :

And the heads of the steeds in their headgear
of war, and their corseleted breasts,

Gleam broad as the brows of the billows that
brighten the storm with their crests,

Gleam dread as their bosoms that heave to the
shipwrecking wind as they rise,

Filled full of the terror and thunder of water,
that slays as it dies.

So dire is the glare of their foreheads, so fear-
ful the fire of their breath,

And the light of their eyeballs enkindled so
bright with the lightnings of death ;

And the foam of their mouths as the sea's when
the jaws of its gulf are as graves,

And the ridge of their necks as the wind-shaken
mane on the ridges of waves :

And their fetlocks afire as they rear drip thick
with a dewfall of blood

As the lips of the rearing breaker with froth of
the manslaying flood :

And the whole plain rears and resounds as the
fields of the sea by night

When the stroke of the wind falls darkling,
and death is the seafarer's light.

But thou, fair beauty of heaven, dear face of
the day night dead,

What horror hath hidden thy glory, what hand
hath muffled thine head ?

O sun, with what song shall we call thee, or
ward off thy wrath by what name,

With what prayer shall we seek to thee,
soothe with what incense, assuage with
what gift,

If thy light be such only as lightens to death-
ward the seamen adrift

With the fire of his house for a beacon, that
foemen have wasted with flame ?

Arise now, lift up thy light ; give ear to us,
put forth thine hand,

Reach toward us thy torch of deliverance, a
lamp for the night of the land ;

Thine eye is the light of the living, no lamp
for the dead ;

O, lift up the light of thine eye on the dark
of our dread.

Who hath blinded thee ? who hath prevailed
on thee ? who hath ensnared ?

Who hath broken thy bow, and the shafts
for thy battle prepared ?

Have they found out a fetter to bind thee, a
chain for thine arm that was bared ?

Be the name of thy conqueror set forth, and
the might of thy master declared.

O God, fair God of the morning, O glory of
day,

What ails thee to cast from thy forehead its
garland away ?

To pluck from thy temples their chaplet enwreathed of the light,
 And bind on the brows of thy godhead a frontlet of night?
 Thou hast loosened the necks of thine horses,
 and goaded their flanks with affright,
 To the race of a course that we know not on ways that are hid from our sight.
 As a wind through the darkness the wheels of their chariot are whirled,
 And the light of its passage is night on the face of the world.
 And there falls from the wings of thy glory no help from on high,
 But a shadow that smites us with fear and desire of thine eye.
 For our hearts are as reeds that a wind on the water bows down and goes by,
 To behold not thy comfort in heaven that hath left us untimely to die.
 But what light is it now leaps forth on the land
 Enkindling the waters and ways of the air
 From thy forehead made bare,
 From the gleam of thy bow-bearing hand?
 Hast thou set not thy right hand again to the string,
 With the back-bowed horns bent sharp for a spring
 And the barbed shaft drawn,
 Till the shrill steel sing and the tense nerve ring
 That pierces the heart of the dark with dawn,
 O huntsman, O king,
 When the flame of thy face hath twilight in chase
 As a hound hath a blood-mottled fawn?
 He has glanced into golden the grey sea-strands,
 And the clouds are shot through with the fires of his hands,
 And the height of the hollow of heaven that he fills
 As the heart of a strong man is quickened and thrills;
 High over the folds of the low-lying lands,
 On the shadowless hills
 As a guard on his watchtower he stands.
 All earth and all ocean, all depth and all height,
 At the flash of an eyebeam are filled with his might:
 The sea roars backward, the storm drops dumb,

And silence as dew on the fire of the fight
 Falls kind in our ears as his face in our sight
 With presage of peace to come.
 Fresh hope in my heart from the ashes of dread
 Leaps clear as a flame from the pyres of the dead,
 That joy out of woe
 May arise as the spring out of the tempest and snow,
 With the flower-feasted month in her hands rose-red
 Borne soft as a babe from the bearing-bed.
 Yet it knows not indeed if a God be friend,
 If rescue may be from the rage of the sea,
 Or the wrath of its lord have end.
 For the season is full now of death or of birth,
 To bring forth life, or an end of all;
 And we know not if anything stand or fall
 That is girdled about with the round sea's girth
 As a town with its wall;
 But thou that art highest of the Gods most high,
 That art lord if we live, that art lord though we die,
 Have heed of the tongues of our terror that cry
 For a grace to the children of Earth.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

Sons of Athens, heavy-laden with the holy weight of years,
 Be your hearts as young men's lightened of their loathlier load of fears;
 For the wave is sunk whose thunder shoreward shook the shuddering lands
 And unbreached of warring waters Athens like a sea-rock stands.

CHORUS.

Well thy word has cheered us, well thy face and glittering eyes, that spake
 Ere thy tongue spake words of comfort; yet no pause behoves it make
 Till the whole good hap find utterance that the Gods have given at length.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

All is this, that yet the city stand unforced by stranger strength.

CHORUS.

Sweeter sound might no mouth utter in man's
ear than this thy word.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

Feed thy soul then full of sweetness till some
bitter note be heard.

CHORUS.

None, if this ring sure, can mar the music fallen
from heaven as rain.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

If no fire of sun or star untimely sear the tender
grain.

CHORUS.

Fresh the dewfall of thy tidings on our hopes
reflowering lies.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

Till a joyless shower and fruitless blight them,
raining from thine eyes.

CHORUS.

Bitter springs have barren issues ; these bedew
grief's arid sands.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

Such thank-offerings ask such altars as expect
thy suppliant hands.

CHORUS.

Tears for triumph, wail for welfare, what strange
godhead's shrine requires ?

ATHENIAN HERALD.

Death or victory's be it, a funeral torch feeds
all its festal fires.

CHORUS.

Like a star should burn the beacon flaming
from our city's head.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

Like a balefire should the flame go up that says
the king is dead.

CHORUS.

Out of heaven, a wild-haired meteor, shoots
this new sign, scattering fear.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

Yea, the word has wings of fire that hovered,
loth to burn thine ear.

CHORUS.

From thy lips it leapt forth loosened on a shrill
and shadowy wing.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

Long they faltered, fain to hide it deep as death
that hides the king.

CHORUS.

Dead with him blind hope lies blasted by the
lightning of one sword.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

On thy tongue truth wars with error ; no man's
edge hath touched thy lord.

CHORUS.

False was thine then, jangling menace like a
warsteed's brow-bound bell ?

ATHENIAN HERALD.

False it rang not joy nor sorrow ; but by no
man's hand he fell.

CHORUS.

Vainly then good news and evil through so faint
a trumpet spake.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

All too long thy soul yet labors, as who sleep-
ing fain would wake,

Waking, fain would fall on sleep again ; the
 woe thou knowest not yet,
 When thou knowest, shall make thy memory
 thirst and hunger to forget.

CHORUS.

Long my heart has hearkened, hanging on thy
 clamorous ominous cry,
 Fain yet fearful of the knowledge whence it
 looks to live or die ;
 Now to take the perfect presage of thy dark
 and side-long flight
 Comes a surer soothsayer sorrowing, sable-
 stoled as birds of night.

PRAXITHEA.

Man, what thy mother bare thee born to say
 Speak ; for no word yet wavering on thy lip
 Can wound me worse than thought forestalls or
 fear.

ATHENIAN HERALD.

I have no will to weave too fine or far,
 O queen, the weft of sweet with bitter speech,
 Bright words with darkling ; but the brief
 truth shown
 Shall plead my pardon for a lingering tongue,
 Loth yet to strike hope through the heart and
 slay.
 The sun's light still was lordly housed in heaven
 When the twain fronts of war encountering
 smote
 First fire out of the battle ; but not long
 Had the fresh wave of windy fight begun
 Heaving, and all the surge of swords to sway,
 When timeless night laid hold of heaven, and
 took
 With its great gorge the noon as in a gulf,
 Strangled ; and thicker than the shrill-winged
 shafts
 Flew the fleet lightnings, held in chase through
 heaven
 By headlong heat of thunders on their trail
 Loosed as on quest of quarry ; that our host
 Smit with sick presage of some wrathful God
 Quailed, but the foe as from one iron throat
 With one great sheer sole thousand-throated
 cry
 Shook earth, heart-staggered from their shout,
 and clove
 The eyeless hollow of heaven ; and breached
 therewith

As with an onset of strength-shattering sound
 The rent vault of the roaring noon of night
 From her throned seat of usurpation rang
 Reverberate answer ; such response there
 pealed
 As though the tide's charge of a storming sea
 Had burst the sky's wall, and made broad a
 breach
 In the ambient girth and bastion flanked with
 stars
 Guarding the fortress of the Gods, and all
 Crashed now together on ruin ; and through
 that cry
 And higher above it ceasing one man's note
 Tore its way like a trumpet : *Charge, make out,
 Charge, halt not, strike, rend up their strength
 by the roots,
 Strike, break them, make your birthright's
 promise sure,
 Show your hearts hardier than the fenced land
 breeds
 And souls breathed in you from no spirit of
 earth,
 Sons of the sea's waves ; and all ears that heard
 Rang with that fiery cry, that the fine air
 Thereat was fired, and kindling filled the plain
 Full of that fierce and trumpet-quenching breath
 That spake the clarions silent ; no glad song
 For folk to hear that wist how dire a God
 Begat this peril to them, what strong race
 Fathered the sea-born tongue that sang them
 death,
 Threatening ; so raged through the red foam of
 fight
 Poseidon's son Eumolpus ; and the war
 Quailed round him coming, and our side bore
 back,
 As a stream thwarted by the wind and sea
 That meet it midway mouth to mouth, and beat
 The flood back of its issue ; but the king
 Shouted against them, crying, *O Father-God,
 Source of the God my father, from thine hand
 Send me what end seems good now in thy sight,
 But death from mine to this man ; and the
 word*
 Quick on his lips yet like a blast of fire
 Blew them together ; and round its lord that met
 Paused all the reeling battle ; two main waves
 Meeting, one hurled sheer from the sea-wall
 back
 That shocks it sideways, one right in from sea
 Charging, that full in face takes at one blow
 That whole recoil and ruin, with less fear
 Startle men's eyes late shipwrecked ; for a
 breath*

Crest fronting crest hung, wave to wave rose
poised,
Then clashed, breaker to breaker ; cloud with
cloud

In heaven, chariot with chariot closed on earth,
One fourfold flash and thunder ; yet a breath,
And with the king's spear through his red
heart's root

Driven, like a rock split from its hill-side, fell
Hurled under his own horsehoofs dead on earth
The sea-beast that made war on earth from sea,
Dumb, with no shrill note left of storming song,
Eumolpus ; and his whole host with one stroke
Spear-stricken through its dense deep iron
heart

Fell hurtling from us, and in fierce recoil
Drew seaward as with one wide wail of waves,
Resorbed with reluctance ; such a groan
Rose from the fluctuant reflux of its ranks,
Sucked sullen back and strengthless ; but
scarce yet

The steeds had sprung and wheels had bruised
their lord

Fallen, when from highest height of the sund-
ering heaven

The Father for his brother's son's sake slain
Sent a sheer shaft of lightning writhen and
smote

Right on his son's son's forehead, that unhelmed
Shone like the star that shines down storm,
and gave

Light to men's eyes that saw thy lord their king
Stand and take breath from battle ; then too
soon

Saw sink down as a sunset in sea-mist
The high bright head that here in van of the
earth

Rose like a headland, and through storm and
night

Took all the sea's wrath on it ; and now dead
They bring thee back by war-forsaken ways
The strength called once thy husband, the great
guard

That was of all men, stay of all men's lives,
They bear him slain of no man but a God,
Godlike ; and toward him dead the city's gates
Fling their arms open mother-like, through
him

Saved ; and the whole clear land is purged of
war.

What wilt thou say now of this weal and woe ?

PRAXITHEA.

I praise the Gods for Athens. O sweet Earth,

Mother, what joy thy soul has of thy son,
Thy life of my dead lord, mine own soul knows
That knows thee godlike ; and what grief
should mine,

What sorrow should my heart have, who behold
Thee made so heavenlike happy ? This alone
I only of all these blessed, all thy kind,
Crave this for blessing to me, that in theirs
Have but a part thus bitter ; give me too
Death, and the sight of eyes that meet not
mine.

And thee too from no godless heart or tongue
Reproachful, thee too by thy living name,
Father divine, merciful God, I call,
Spring of my life-springs, fountain of my s'ream,
Pure and poured forth to one great end with
thine,

Sweet head sublime of triumph and these tears,
Cephisus, if thou seest as gladly shed
Thy blood in mine as thine own waves are
given

To do this great land good, to give for love
The same lips drink and comfort the same
hearts,

Do thou then, O my father, white-souled God,
To thy most pure earth-hallowing heart eterne
Take what thou gavest to be given for these,
Take thy child to thee ; for her time is full,
For all she hath borne she hath given, seen all
she had

Flow from her, from her eyes and breasts and
hands

Flow forth to feed this people ; but be thou,
Dear God and gracious to all souls alive,
Good to thine own seed also ; let me sleep,
Father ; my sleepless darkling day is done,
My day of life like night, but slumberless :
For all my fresh fair springs, and his that ran
In one stream's bed with mine, are all run out
Into the deep of death. The Gods have saved
Athens ; my blood has bought her at their
hand,

And ye sit safe ; be glorious and be glad
As now for all time always, countrymen,
And love my dead for ever ; but me, me,
What shall man give for these so good as death ?

CHORUS.

From the cup of my heart I pour through my
lips along

The mingled wine of a joyful and sorrowful
song ;

Wine sweeter than honey and bitterer than
blood that is poured

From the chalice of gold, from the point of the
two-edged sword.
For the city redeemed should joy flow forth as
a flood,
And a dirge make moan for the city polluted
with blood.
Great praise should the Gods have surely, my
country, of thee,
Were thy brow but as white as of old for thy
sons to see,
Were thy hands as bloodless, as blameless thy
cheek divine ;
But a stain on it stands of the life-blood offered
for thine.
What thanks shall we give that are mixed not
and marred with dread
For the price that has ransomed thine own
with thine own child's head ?
For a taint there cleaves to the people re-
deemed with blood,
And a plague to the blood-red hand.
The rain shall not cleanse it, the dew nor the
sacred flood
That blesses the glad live land.
In the darkness of earth beneath, in the world
without sun,
The shadows of past things reign ;
And a cry goes up from the ghost of an ill deed
done,
And a curse for a virgin slain.

ATHENA.

Hear, men that mourn, and woman without
mate,
Hearken ; ye sick of soul with fear, and thou
Dumb-stricken for thy children ; hear ye too,
Earth, and the glory of heaven, and winds of
the air,
And the most holy heart of the deep sea,
Late worth, now full of quiet ; hear thou, sun,
Rolled round with the upper fire of rolling
heaven
And all the stars returning ; hill and streams,
Springs and fresh fountains, day that seest these
deeds,
Night that shalt hide not ; and thou child of
mine,
Child of a maiden, by a maid redeemed,
Blood-guiltless, though bought back with inno-
cent blood,
City mine own ; I Pallas bring thee word,
I virgin daughter of the most high God
Give all you charge and lay command on all
The word I bring be wasted not ; for this

The Gods have stablished and his soul hath
sworn,
That time nor earth nor changing sons of man
Nor waves of generations, nor the winds
Of ages risen and fallen that steer their tides
Through light and dark of birth and lovelier
death
From storm toward haven inviolable, shall see
So great a light alive beneath the sun
As the awless eye of Athens ; all fame else
Shall be to her fame as a shadow in sleep
To this wide noon at waking ; men most praised
In lands most happy for their children found
Shall hold as highest of honors given of God
To be but likened to the least of thine,
Thy least of all, my city ; thine shall be
The crown of all songs sung, of all deeds done
Thine the full flower for all time ; in thine hand
Shall time be like a sceptre, and thine head
Wear worship for a garland ; nor one leaf
Shall change or winter cast out of thy crown
Till all flowers wither in the world ; thine eyes
Shall first in man's flash lightning liberty,
Thy tongue shall first say freedom ; thy first hand
Shall loose the thunder terror as a hound
To hunt from sunset to the springs of the sun
Kings that rose up out of the populous east
To make their quarry of thee, and shall strew
With multitudinous limbs of myriad herds
The foodless pastures of the sea, and make
With wrecks immeasurable and unsummed
defeat
One ruin of all their many-folded flocks
Ill shepherded from Asia ; by thy side
Shall fight thy son the north wind, and the sea
That was thine enemy shall be sworn thy friend
And hand be struck in hand of his and thine
To hold faith fast for aye ; with thee, though
each
Make war on other, wind and sea shall keep
Peace, and take truce as brethren for thy sake
Leagued with one spirit and single-hearted
strength
To break thy foes in pieces, who shall meet
The wind's whole soul and might of the main
sea
Full in their face of battle, and become
A laughter to thee ; like a shower of leaves
Shall their long galleys rank by staggering rank
Be dashed adrift on ruin, and in thy sight
The sea deride them, and that lord of the air
Who took by violent hand thy child to wife
With his loud lips bemock them, by his
breath
Swept out of sight of being ; so great a grace

Shall this day give thee, that makes one in heart
With mine the deep sea's godhead, and his son
With him that was thine helmsman, king with
king,

Dead man with dead ; such only names as these
Shalt thou call royal, take none else or less
To hold of men in honor ; but with me
Shall these be worshiped as one God, and mix
With mine the might of their mysterious names
In one same shrine served singly, thence to keep
Perpetual guard on Athens ; time and change,
Masters and lords of all men, shall be made
To thee that knowest no master and no lord
Servants ; the days that lighten heaven and
nights

That darken shall be ministers of thine
To attend upon thy glory, the great years
As light-engraved letters of thy name
Writ by the sun's hand on the front of the
earth

For world-beholden witness ; such a gift
For one fair chaplet of three lives enwreathed
To hang for ever from thy storied shrine,
And this thy steersman fallen with tiller in hand
To stand for ever at thy ship's helm seen,
Shall he that bade their threefold flower be
shorn

And laid him low that planted, give thee back
In sign of sweet land reconciled with sea
And heavenlike earth with heaven ; such
promise-pledge

I daughter without mother born of God
To the most woful mother born of man
I light for continual comfort. Hail, and live
Beyond all human hap of mortal doom
Happy ; for so my sire hath sworn and I.

PRAXITHEA.

O queen Athena, from a heart made whole

Take as thou givest us blessing ; never tear
Shall stain for shame nor groan untune the
song

That as a bird shall spread and fold its wings
Here in thy praise for ever, and fulfil
The whole world's crowning city crowned with
thee

As the sun's eye fulfils and crowns with sight
The circling crown of heaven. There is no
grief

Great as the joy to be made one in will
With him that is the heart and rule of life
And thee, God born of God ; thy name is ours,
And thy large grace more great than our de-
sire.

CHORUS.

From the depth of the springs of my spirit a
fountain is poured of thanksgiving,
My country, my mother, for thee,
That thy dead for their death shall have life in
thy sight and a name everliving
At heart of thy people to be.

In the darkness of change on the waters of
time they shall turn from afar

To the beam of this dawn for a beacon, the
light of these pyres for a star.

They shall see thee who love and take comfort,
who hate thee shall see and take warn-
ing,

Our mother that makest us free ;
And the sons of thine earth shall have help of
the waves that made war on their morn-
ing,

And friendship and fame of the sea.

STUDIES IN SONG.

SONG FOR THE CENTENARY

OF

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

BORN JANUARY 30TH, 1775.

DIED SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1864.

There is delight in singing, though none hear
Beside the singer : and there is delight
In praising, though the praiser sit alone
And see the praised far off him, far above.

LANDOR.

DEDICATION.

TO MRS. LYNN LINTON.

*Daughter in spirit elect and consecrate
 By love and reverence of the Olympian sire
 Whom I too loved and worshipped, seeing so great,
 And found so gracious toward my long desire
 To bid that love in song before his gate
 Sound, and my lute be loyal to his lyre,
 To none save one it now may dedicate
 Song's new burnt-offering on a century's pyre.
 And though the gift be light
 As ashes in men's sight,
 Left by the flame of no ethereal fire,
 Yet, for his worthier sake
 Than words are worthless, take
 This wreath of words ere yet their hour expire:
 So, haply, from some heaven above,
 He, seeing, may set next yours my sacrifice of love.*
 May 24, 1880.

1.

FIVE years beyond an hundred years have seen
 Their winters, white as faith's and age's hue,
 Melt, smiling through brief tears that broke
 between,
 And hope's young conquering colors reared
 anew,
 Since, on the day whose edge for kings made
 keen
 Smote sharper once than ever storm-wind
 blew,
 A head predestined for the girdling green
 That laughs at lightning all the seasons
 through,
 Nor frost or change can sunder
 Its crown untouched of thunder
 Leaf from least leaf of all its leaves that grew
 Alone for brows too bold
 For storm to sear of old,
 Elect to shine in time's eternal view,
 Rose on the verge of radiant life
 Between the winds and sunbeams mingling
 love with strife.

2.

The darkling day that gave its bloodred
 birth
 To Milton's white republic undefiled
 That might endure so few fleet years on
 earth
 Bore in him likewise as divine a child;
 But born not less for crowns of love and mirth,
 Of palm and myrtle passionate and mild,
 The leaf that girds about with gentler girth
 The brow steel-bound in battle, and the
 wild
 Soft spray that flowers above
 The flower-soft hair of love;
 And the white lips of wayworn winter smil-
 ed
 And grew serene as spring's
 When with stretched clouds like wings
 Or wings like drift of snow-clouds massed
 and piled
 The godlike giant, softening, spread
 A shadow of stormy shelter round the new-
 born head.

3.

And o'er it brightening bowed the wild-haired
 hour,
 And touched his tongue with honey and with
 fire,
 And breathed between his lips the note of
 power
 That makes of all the winds of heaven a
 lyre
 Whose strings are stretched from topmost
 peaks that tower
 To softest springs of waters that suspire,
 With sounds too dim to shake the lowliest
 flower
 Breathless with hope and dauntless with de-
 sire :
 And bright before his face
 That Hour became a Grace,
 As in the light of their Athenian quire
 When the Hours before the sun
 And Graces were made one,
 Called by sweet Love down from the aerial
 gyre
 By one dear name of natural joy,
 To bear on her bright breast from heaven a
 heaven-born boy.

4.

Ere light could kiss the little lids in sunder
 Or love could lift them for the sun to
 smite,
 His fiery birth-star as a sign of wonder
 Had risen, perplexing the presageful night
 With shadow and glory around her sphere and
 under
 And portents prophesying by sound and
 sight ;
 And half the sound was song and half was
 thunder,
 And half his life of lightning, half of
 light :
 And in the soft clenched hand
 Shone like a burning brand
 A shadowy sword for swordless fields of
 fight,
 Wrought only for such lord
 As so may wield the sword
 That all things ill be put to fear and
 flight
 Even at the flash and sweep and gleam
 Of one swift stroke beheld but in a shuddering
 dream.

5.

Like the sun's rays that blind the night's wild
 beasts
 The sword of song shines as the swordsman
 sings ;
 From the west wind's verge even to the ardu-
 ous east's
 The splendor of the shadow that it flings
 Makes fire and storm in heaven above the
 feasts
 Of men fulfilled with food of evil things ;
 Strikes dumb the lying and hungering lips of
 priests,
 Smites dead the slaying and ravening hands
 of kings ;
 Turns dark the lamp's hot light,
 And turns the darkness bright
 As with the shadow of dawn's reverberate
 wings ;
 And far before its way
 Heaven, yearning toward the day,
 Shines with its thunder and round its light-
 ning rings ;
 And never hand yet earlier played
 With that keen sword whose hilt is cloud, and
 fire its blade.

6.

As dropping flakes of honey-heavy dew
 More soft than slumber's, fell the first note's
 sound
 From strings the swift young hand strayed
 lightlier through
 Than leaves through calm air wheeling
 toward the ground
 Stray down the drifting wind when skies are
 blue
 Nor yet the wings of latter winds un-
 bound,
 Ere winter loosen all the Æolian crew
 With storm unleashed behind them like a
 hound.
 As lightly rose and sank
 Beside a green-flowered bank
 The clear first notes his burning boyhood
 found
 To sing her sacred praise
 Who rode her city's ways
 Clothed with bright hair and with high pur-
 pose crowned ;
 A song of soft presageful breath,
 Prefiguring all his love and faith in life and
 death ;

7.

Who should love two things only and only
 praise
 More than all else for ever : even the glory
 Of goodly beauty in women, whence all days
 Take light whereby death's self seems
 transitory ;
 And loftier love than loveliest eyes can raise,
 Love that wipes off the miry stains and gory
 From Time's worn feet, besmirched on blood-
 red ways,
 And lightens with his light the night of story ;
 Love that lifts up from dust
 Life, and makes darkness just,
 And purges as with fire of purgatory
 The dense disastrous air,
 To burn old falsehood bare
 And give the wind its ashes heaped and
 hoary ;
 Love, that with eyes of ageless youth
 Sees on the breast of Freedom borne her nurs-
 ling Truth.

8.

For at his birth the sistering stars were one
 That flamed upon it as one fiery star ;
 Freedom, whose light makes pale the mount-
 ing sun,
 And Song, whose fires are quenched when
 Freedom's are.
 Of all that love not liberty let none
 Love her that fills our lips with fire from far
 To mix with winds and seas in unison
 And sound athwart life's tideless harbor-bar
 Out where our songs fly free
 Across time's bounded sea,
 A boundless flight beyond the dim's sun car,
 Till all the spheres of night
 Chime concord round their flight
 Too loud for blasts of warring change to
 mar,
 From stars that sang for Homer's birth
 To these that gave our Landor welcome back
 from earth.

9.

Shine, as above his cradle, on his grave,
 Stars of our worship, lights of our desire !
 For never man that heard the world's wind
 rave
 To you was truer in trust of heart and lyre :

Nor Greece nor England on a brow more
 brave
 Behold your flame against the wind burn
 higher:
 Nor all the gusts that blanch life's worldly
 wave
 With surf and surge could quench its flaw-
 less fire :
 No blast of ali that blow
 Might but the torch burn low
 That lightens on us yet as o'er his pyre,
 Indomitable of storm,
 That now no flaws deform
 Nor thwart wills baffle ere it all aspire,
 One light of godlike breath and flame,
 To write on heaven with man's most glorious
 names his name.

10.

The very dawn was dashed with stormy dew
 And freaked with fire as when God's hand
 would mar
 Palaces reared of tyrants, and the blue
 Deep heaven was kindled round her thunder-
 ous car,
 That saw how swift a gathering glory grew
 About him risen, ere clouds could blind or
 bar
 A splendor strong to burn and burst them
 through
 And mix in one sheer light things near and
 far.
 First flew before his path
 Light shafts of love and wrath,
 But winged and edged as elder warriors'
 are ;
 Then rose a light that showed
 Across the midsea road
 From radiant Calpe to revealed Masar
 The way of war and love and fate
 Between the goals of fear and fortune, hope
 and hate.

11.

Mine own twice banished fathers' harbor-land,
 Their nursing-mother France, the well-be-
 loved,
 By the arduous blast of sanguine sunrise fanned,
 Flamed on him, and his burning lips were
 moved
 As that live statue's throned on Lybian sand
 When morning moves it, ere her light faith
 roved

From promise, and her tyrant's poisonous
hand

Fed hope with Corsic honey till she proved

More deadly than despair

And falser even than fair,

Though fairer than all elder hopes removed

As landmarks by the crime

Of inundating time ;

Light faith by grief too loud too long re-
proved :

For even as in some darkling dance

Wronged love changed hands with hate, and
turned his heart from France.

12.

But past the snows and summits Pyrenean

Love stronger-winged held more prevailing
flight,

That o'er Tyrrhene, Iberian, and Ægean

Shores lightened with one storm of sound
and light.

From earliest even to hoariest years one pæan

Rang rapture through the fluctuant roar of
fight,

From Nestor's tongue in accents Achillean

On death's blind verge dominant over night.

For voice as hand and hand

As voice for one fair land

Rose radiant, smote sonorous, past the height

Where darkling pines enrobe

The steel-cold Lake of Gaube,

Deep as dark death and keen as death to
smite,

To where on peak or moor or plain

His heart and song and sword were one to
strike for Spain.

13.

Resurgent at his lifted voice and hand

Pale in the light of war or treacherous fate

Song bade before him all their shadows stand

For whom his will unbarred their funeral
grate.

The father by whose wrong revenged his land

Was given for sword and fire to desolate

Rose fire-encircled as a burning brand,

Great as the woes he wrought and bore were
great.

Fair as she smiled and died,

Death's crowned and breathless bride

Smiled as one living even on craft and hate :

And pity, a star unrisen,

Scarce lit Ferrante's prison

Ere night unnatural closed the natural gate
That gave their life and love and light

To those fair eyes despoiled by fratricide of
sight.

14.

Tears bright and sweet as fire and incense fell

In perfect notes of music-measured pain

On veiled sweet heads that heard not love's
farewell

Sob through the song that bade them rise
again ;

Rise in the light of living song, to dwell

With memories crowned of memory : so the
strain

Made soft as heaven the stream that girdles
hell

And sweet the darkness of the breathless
plain,

And with Elysian flowers

Recrowned the wreathless hours

That mused and mourned upon their works
in vain ;

For all their works of death

Song filled with light and breath,

And listening grief relaxed her lightning
chain ;

For sweet as all the wide sweet south

She found the song like honey from the lion's
mouth.

15.

High from his throne in heavens Simonides,

Crowned with mild aureole of memorial
tears

That the everlasting sun of all time sees

All golden, molten from the forge of years,

Smiled, as the gift was laid upon his knees

Of song that hang like pearls in mourners'
ears,

Mild as the murmuring of Hymettian bees

And honied as their harvest, that endears

The toil of flowery days ;

And smiling perfect praise

Hailed his one brother mateless else of
peers :

Whom we that hear not him

For length of date grown dim

Hear, and the heart grows glad of grief that
hears ;

And harshest heights of sorrowing hours,

Like snows of Alpine April, melt from tears to
flowers.

16.

Therefore to him the shadow of death was
 none,
 The darkness was not, nor the temporal
 tomb :

And multitudinous time for him was one,
 Who bade before his equal seat of doom
 Rise and stand up for judgment in the sun
 The weavers of the world's large-historied
 loom,

By their own works of light or darkness done
 Clothed round with light or girt about with
 gloom.

In speech of purer gold

Than even they spake of old

He bade the breath of Sidney's lips relume

The fire of thought and love

That made his bright life move

Through fair brief seasons of benignant
 bloom

To blameless music ever, strong

As death and sweet as death-annihilating song.

17.

Thought gave his wings the width of time to
 roam,

Love gave his thought strength equal to re-
 lease

From bonds of old forgetful years like foam

Vanished, the fame of memories that de-
 crease ;

So strongly faith had fledged for flight from
 home

The soul's large pinions till her strife should
 cease :

And through the trumpet of a child of Rome
 Rang the pure music of the flutes of Greece.

As though some northern hand

Reft from the Latin land

A spoil more costly than the Colchian fleece

To clothe with golden sound

Of old joy newly found

And rapture as of penetrating peace

The naked north-wind's cloudiest clime,

And give its darkness light of the old Sicilian
 time.

18.

He saw the brand that fired the towers of Troy

Fade, and the darkness at CEnone's prayer

Close upon her that closed upon her boy,

For all the curse of godhead that she bare ;

And the Apollonian serpent gleam and toy

With scathless maiden limbs and shuddering
 hair ;

And his love smitten in their dawn of joy

Leave Pan the pine-leaf of her charge to
 wear ;

And one in flowery coils

Caught as in fiery toils

Smite Calydon with mourning unaware ;

And where her low turf shrine

Showed Modesty divine

The fairest mother's daughter far more fair

Hide on her breast the heavenly shame

That kindled once with love should kindle
 Troy with flame.

19.

Nor less the light of story than of song

With graver glories girt his godlike head,

Reverted away from the temporal throng

Of lives that live not toward the living dead.

The shadows and the splendors of their throng

Made bright and dark about his board and
 bed

The lines of life and vision, sweet or strong

With sound of lutes or trumpets blown,
 that led

Forth of the ghostly gate

Opening in spite of fate

Shapes of majestic or tumultuous tread,

Divine and direful things,

These foul as priests or kings,

Those fair as heaven or love of freedom, red

With blood and green with palms and
 white

With raiment woven of deeds divine and words
 of light.

20.

The thunder-fire of Cromwell, and the ray

That keeps the place of Phocion's name
 serene

And clears the cloud from Kosciuszko's day,

Alternate as dark hours with bright between,

Met in the heaven of his high thought, which
 lay

For all stars open that all eyes had seen

Rise on the night or twilight of the way

Where feet of human hopes and fears had
 been.

Again the sovereign word

On Milton's lips was heard

Living : again the tender three days' queen

Drew bright and gentle breath
 On the sharp edge of death :
And, staged again to show of mortal scene,
Tiberius, ere his name grew dire,
Wept, stainless yet of empire, tears of blood
and fire.

21.

Most ardent and most awful and most fond,
 The fervor of his Apollonian eye
 Yearned upon Hellas, yet enthralled in bond
 Of time whose years beheld her and passed
 by
 Silent and shameful, till she rose and donned
 The casque again of Pallas ; for her cry
 Forth of the past and future, depths beyond
 This where the present and its tyrants lie,
 As one great voice of twain
 For him had pealed again,
 Heard but of hearts high as her own was
 high,
 High as her own and his
 And pure as love's heart is,
 That lives through hope at once and mem-
 ory die :
 And with her breath his clarion's blast
 Was filled as cloud with fire or future souls
 with past.

22.

As a wave only obsequious to the wind
 Leaps to the lifting breeze that bids it leap,
 Large-hearted, and its thickening mane be
 thinned
 By the strong god's breath moving on the
 deep
 From utmost Atlas even the extremest Ind
 That shakes the plain where no men sow nor
 reap,
 So, moved with wrath toward men that ruled
 and sinned
 And pity toward all tears he saw men
 weep,
 Arose to take man's part
 His loving lion heart,
 Kind as the sun's that has in charge to
 keep
 Earth and the seed thereof
 Safe in his lordly love,
 Strong as sheer truth and soft as very sleep ;
 The mightiest heart since Milton's leapt,
 The gentlest since the gentlest heart of Shake-
 speare slept.

23.

Like the wind's own on her divided sea
 His song arose on Corinth, and aloud
 Recalled her Isthmian song and strife when
 she
 Was thronged with glories as with gods in
 crowd
 And as the wind's own spirit her breath was
 free
 And as the heaven's own heart her soul was
 proud,
 But freer and prouder stood no son than he
 Of all she bare before her heart was bowed ;
 None higher than he who heard
 Medea's keen last word
 Transpierce her traitor, and like a rushing
 cloud
 That sundering shows a star
 Saw pass her thunderous car
 And a face whiter and deadlier than a shroud
 That lightened from it, and the brand
 Of tender blood that falling seared his suppli-
 ant hand.

24.

More fair than all things born and slain of fate,
 More glorious than all births of days and
 nights,
 He bade the spirit of man regenerate,
 Rekindling, rise and reassume the rights
 That in high seasons of his old estate
 Clothed him and armed with majesties and
 might
 Heroic, when the times and hearts were great
 And in the depths of ages rose the heights
 Radiant of high deeds done
 And souls that matched the sun
 For splendor with the lightnings of their
 lights
 Whence even their uttered names
 Burn like the strong twin flames
 Of song that shakes a throne and steel that
 smites ;
 As on Thermopylæ when shone
 Leonidas, on Syracuse Timoleon.

25.

Or, sweeter than the breathless buds when
 spring
 With smiles and tears and kisses bids them
 breathe,
 Fell with its music from his quiring string

Fragrance of pine-leaves and odorous heath
Twined round the lute whereto he sighed to
sing

Of the oak that screened and showed its
maid beneath,
Who seeing her bee crawl back with broken
wing

Faded, a fairer flower than all her wreath,
And paler, though her oak
Stood scathless of the stroke
More sharp than edge of axe or wolfish teeth,
That mixed with mortals dead
Her own half heavenly head
And life incorporate with a sylvan sheath,
And left the wild rose and the dove
A secret place and sacred from all guests but
Love.

26.

But in the sweet clear fields beyond the river
Dividing pain from peace and man from
shade

He saw the wings that there no longer quiver
Sink of the hours whose parting footfalls
fade

On cars which hear the rustling amaranth
shiver

With sweeter sound of wind than ever made
Music on earth : departing, they deliver
The soul that shame or wrath or sorrow

swayed ;

And round the king of men
Clash the clear arms again,
Clear of all soil and bright as laurel braid,
That rang less high for joy
Through the gates fallen of Troy

Than here to hail the sacrificial maid,
Iphigenia, when the ford
Fast-flowing of sorrows brought her father and
their lord.

27.

And in the clear gulf of the hollow sea
He saw light glimmering through the grave
green gloom

That hardly gave the sun's eye leave to see
Cymodameia ; but nor tower nor tomb,
No tower on earth, no tomb of waves may be,

That may not sometime by diviner doom
Be plain and previous to the poet ; he
Bids time stand back from him and fate
make room

For passage of his feet,

Strong as their own are fleet,
And yield the prey no years may reassume
Through all their clamorous track,
Nor night nor day win back
Nor give to darkness what his eyes illumine
And his lips bless for ever : he
Knows what earth knows not, sings truth sung
not of the sea.

28.

Before the sentence of a curule chair
More sacred than the Roman, rose and stood
To take their several doom the imperial pair
Diversely borne of Venus, and in mood
Diverse as their one mother, and as fair,
Though like two stars contrasted, and as good.
Though different as dark eyes from golden hair ;
One as that iron planet red like blood

That bears among the stars
Fierce witness of her Mars
In bitter fire by her sweet light subdued ;
One in the gentler skies
Sweet as her amorous eyes :

One proud of worlds and seas and darkness
rude
Composed and conquered ; one content
With lightnings from loved eyes of lovers
lightly sent.

29.

And where Alpheus and where Ladon ran
Radiant, by many a rushy and rippling cove
More known to glance of god than wandering
man,

He sang the strife of strengths divine that
strove,
Unequal, one with other, for a span,
Who should be friends forever in heaven
above

And here on pastoral earth : Arcadian Pan,
And the awless lord of kings and shepherds,
Love :

All the sweet strife and strange
With fervid counterchange
Till one fierce wail through many a glade
and grove
Rang, and its breath made shiver
The reeds of many a river,
And the warm airs waxed wintry that it
clove,

Keen-edged as ice-retempered brand ;
Nor might god's hurt find healing save of god-
like hand.

30.

As when the jarring gates of thunder ope
Like earthquake felt in heaven, so dire a cry,
So fearful and so fierce—'Give the sword
scope !'—

Rang from a daughter's lips, darkening the
sky

To the extreme azure of all its cloudless cope
With starless horror ; nor the god's own eye
Whose doom bade smite, whose ordinance
bade hope,

Might well endure to see the adulteress die,
The husband-slayer fordone
By swordstroke of her son,

Unutterable, unimaginable on high,
On earth abhorrent, fell
Beyond all scourge of hell,

Yet righteous as redemption : Love stood
nigh,

Mute, sister-like, and closer clung
Than all fierce forms of threatening coil and
maddening tongue.

31.

All these things heard and seen and sung of old,
He heard and saw and sang them. Once
again

Might foot of man tread, eye of man behold
Things unbeholden save of ancient men,
Ways save by gods untrodden. In his hold
The staff that stayed through some Ætnean
glen

The steps of the most highest, most awful-
souled

And mightiest-mouthed of singers, even as
then

Became a prophet's rod,
A lyre on fire of God,

Being still the staff of exile : yea, as when
The voice poured forth on us
Was even of Æschylus,

And his one word great as the crying of ten,
Crying in men's ears of wrath toward
wrong,

Of love toward right immortal, sanctified with
song.

32.

Him too whom none save one before him ever
Beheld, nor since hath man again beholden,
Whom Dante seeing him saw not, nor the
giver

Of all gifts back to man by time withholden,
Shakespeare—him too, whom sea-like ages
sever,

As waves divide men's eyes from lights up-
holden

To landward, from our songs that find him
never,

Seeking, though memory fire and hope em-
bolden—

Him too this **one song** found,
And raised at its sole sound

Up from the dust of darkling dreams and
olden

Legends forlorn of breath,
Up from the deeps of death,

Ulysses : him whose name **turns all songs**
golden,

The wise divine strong soul, whom fate
Could make no less than change and chance
beheld him great.

33.

Nor stands the seer who raised him less august
Before us, nor in judgment frail and rather,
Less constant or less loving or less just,
But fruitful-ripe and full of tender faith,
Holding all high and gentle names in trust
Of time for honor ; so his quickening breath
Called from the darkness of their martyred
dust

Our sweet Saints Alice and Elizabeth,
Revived and reinspired

With speech from heavenward fired

By love to say what Love the Archangel
saith

Only, nor may such word
Save by such ears be heard

As hear the tongues of angels after death
Descending on them like a dove

Has taken all earthly sense of thought away
but love.

34.

All sweet, all sacred, all heroic things,
All generous names and loyal, and all wise,
With all his heart in all its wayfarings
He sought, and worshipped, seeing them
with his eyes

In very present glory, clothed with wings
Of words and deeds and dreams immortal,
rise

Visible more than living slaves and kings,
Audible more than actual vows and lies :

These, with scorn's fieriest rod,
 These and the Lord their God,
 The Lord their likeness, tyrant of the skies
 As they Lord Gods of earth,
 These with a rage of mirth
 He mocked and scourged and spat on, in
 such wise
 That none might stand before his rod,
 And these being slain the Spirit alone be lord
 or God.

35.

For of all souls for all time glorious none
 Loved Freedom better, of all who have lov-
 ed her best,
 Than he who wrote that scripture of the sun
 Writ as with fire and light on heaven's own
 crest,
 Of all words heard on earth the noblest one
 That ever spake for souls and left them blest :
 GLADLY WE SHOULD REST EVER, HAD WE
 WON
 FREEDOM : WE HAVE LOST, AND VERY
 GLADLY REST.
 O poet hero, lord
 And father, we record
 Deep in the burning tablets of the breast
 Thankfully those divine
 And living words of thine
 For faith and comfort in our hearts imprint
 With strokes engraven past hurt of years
 And lines inured with fire of immemorial tears.

36.

But who being less than thou shall sing of thee
 Words worthy of more than pity or less than
 scorn ?
 Who sing the golden garland woven of three,
 Thy daughters, Graces mightier than the
 morn,
 More godlike than the graven gods men see
 Made all but immortal, human born
 And heavenly natured ? With the first came
 He,
 Led by the living hand, who left forlorn
 Life by his death, and time
 More by his life sublime
 Than by the lives of all whom all men
 mourn,
 And even for mourning praise
 Heaven, as for all those days
 These dead men's lives clothed round with
 glories worn

By memory till all time lie dead,
 And higher than all behold the bay round
 Shakespeare's head.

37.

Then, fairer than the fairest Grace of ours,
 Came girl with Grecian gold the second
 Grace,
 And verier daughter of his most perfect hours
 Than any of latter time or alien place
 Named, or with hair inwoven of English
 flowers
 Only, nor wearing on her statelier face
 The lordlier light of Athens. All the Powers
 That graced and guarded round that holiest
 race,
 That heavenliest and most high
 Time hath seen live and die,
 Poured all their power upon him to retrace
 The erased immortal roll
 Of Love's most sovereign scroll
 And Wisdom's warm from Freedom's wide
 embrace,
 The scroll that on Aspasia's knees
 Laid once made manifest the Olympian Peri-
 cles.

38.

Clothed on with tenderest weft of Tuscan
 air,
 Came laughing like Etrurian spring the
 third,
 With green Vaktelsa's hill-flowers in her hair
 Deep-drenched with May-dews, in her voice
 the bird
 Whose voice hath night and morning in it ;
 fair
 As the ambient gold of wall-flowers that
 engird
 The walls engirdling with a circling stair
 My sweet San Gimignano : nor a word
 Fell from her flowerlike mouth
 Not sweet with all the south ;
 As though the dust shrined in Certaldo
 stirred
 And spake, as o'er it shone
 That bright Pentameron,
 And his own vines again and chestnuts
 heard
 Boccaccio : nor swift Elsa's chime
 Mixed not her golden babble with Petrarca's
 rhyme.

39.

No lovelier laughed the garden which receives
 Yet, and yet hides not from our following eyes
 With soft rose-laurels and strawberry-leaves,
 Ternissa, sweet as April-colored skies,
 Bowed like a flowering reed when May's wind
 heaves
 The reed-bed that the stream kisses and
 sighs,
 In love that shrinks and murmurs and believes
 What yet the wisest of the starriest wise
 Whom Greece might ever hear
 Speaks in the gentlest ear
 That ever heard love's lips philosophize
 With such deep reasoning words
 As blossoms use and birds,
 Nor heeds Leontion lingering till they rise
 Far off, in no wise over far,
 Beneath a heaven all amorous of its first-born
 star.

40.

What sound, what s'orm and splendour of
 what fire,
 Darkening the light of heaven, lightening
 the night,
 Rings, rages, flashes round what ravening
 pyre
 That makes time's face pale with its reflex
 light
 And leaves on earth, who seeing might scarce
 respire,
 A shadow of red remembrance? Right nor
 might
 Alternating wore ever shapes more dire
 Nor manifest in all men's awful sight
 In form and face that wore
 Heaven's light and likeness more
 Than these, or held suspense men's hearts
 at height
 More fearful, since man first
 Slaked with man's blood his thirst,
 Than when Rome clashed with Hannibal in
 fight,
 Till tower on ruining tower was hurled
 Where Scipio stood, and Carthage was not in
 the world.

41.

Nor lacked there power of purpose in his hand

Who carved their several praise in words of
 gold
 To bare the brows of conquerors and to brand,
 Made shelterless of laurels bought and sold
 For price of blood or incense, dust or sand,
 Triumph or terror. He that sought of old
 His father Ammon in a stranger's land,
 And shrank before the serpentine fold,
 Stood in our seer's wide eye
 No higher than man most high,
 And lowest in heart when highest in hope to
 hold
 Fast as a scripture furred
 The scroll of all the world
 Sealed with his signet: nor the blind and
 bold
 First thief of empire, round whose head
 Swarmed carrion flies for bees, on flesh for
 violets fed.*

42.

As fire that kisses, killing with a kiss,
 He saw the light of death, riotous and red,
 Flame round the bent brows of Semiramis
 Re-risen, and mightier, from the Assyrian
 dead,
 Kindling, as dawn a frost-bound precipice,
 The steady snows of Russia, for the tread
 Of feet that felt before them crawl and hiss
 The snaky lines of blood violently shed
 Like living creeping things
 That writhe but have no stings
 To scare adulterers from the imperial bed
 Bowed with its load of lust,
 Or chill the ravenous gust
 That made her body a fire from heel to head;
 Or change her high bright spirit and clear,
 For all its mortal stains, from taint of fraud or
 fear.

43.

As light that blesses, hallowing with a look,
 He saw the godhead in Vittoria's face
 Shine soft on Buonarroti's, till he took,
 Albeit himself God, a more godlike grace,
 A strength more heavenly to confront and
 brook
 All ill things coiled about his worldly race,
 From the bright scripture of that present book

* Thy lifelong works, Napoleon, who shall write?
 Time, in his children's blood who takes delight.

From the Greek of London

Wherein his tired grand eyes got power to
trace

Comfort more sweet than youth,
And hope whose child was truth,
And love that brought forth sorrow for a
space,

Only that she might bear
Joy : these things, written there,
Made even his soul's high heaven a heaven-
lier place,

Perused with eyes whose glory and glow
Had in their fires the spirit of Michael Angelo.

44.

With balms and dews of blessing he consoled
The fair fame wounded by the black priest's
fang,

Giovanna's, and washed off her blithe and
bold

Boy-bridegroom's blood, that seemed so
long to hang

On her fair hand, even till the stain of old
Was cleansed with healing song, that after
sang

Sharp truth by sweetest singers' lips untold
Of pale Beatrice, though her death-note rang
From other strings divine
Ere his rekindling line

With yet more piteous and intolerant pang
Pierced all men's hearts anew

That heard her passion through
Till fierce from throes of fiery pity sprang
Wrath, armed for chase of monstrous
beasts,

Strong to lay waste the kingdom of the seed of
priests.

45.

He knew the high-souled humbleness, the
mirth

And majesty of meanest men born free.
That made with Luther's or with Hofer's birth

The whole world worthier of the sun to see :
The wealth of spirit among the snows, the
dearth

Wherein souls festered by the servile sea
That saw the lowest of even crowned heads on
earth

Thronged round with worship in Parthenope.
His hand bade Justice guide

Her child Tyrannicide,
Light winged by fire that brings the dawn to
be ;

And pierced with Tyrrel's dart
Again the riotous heart

That mocked at mercy's tongue and man-
hood's knee :

And opened the cell where kinglike death
Hung o'er her brows disrowned who bare
Elizabeth.

46.

Toward Spenser or toward Bacon proud or
kind

He bared the heart of Essex, twain and one,
For the base heart that soiled the starry mind
Stern, for the father in his child undone
Soft as his own toward children, stamped and
signed

With their sweet image visibly set on
As by God's hand, clear as his own designed
The likeness radiant out of ages gone
That none may now destroy

Of that high Roman boy
Whom Julius and Cleopatra saw their son
True-born of sovereign seed,
Foredoomed even thence to bleed,
The stately grace of bright Caesarion,
The head unbent, the heart unbowed,
That not the shadow of death could make less
clear and proud.

47.

With gracious gods he communed, honoring
thus

At once by service and similitude,
Service devout and worship emulous
Of the same golden Muses once they wooed,
The names and shades adored of all of us,
The nurslings of the brave world's earlier
brood,

Grown gods for us themselves : Theocritus
First, and more dear Catullus, names be-
dewed

With blessings bright like tears
From the old memorial years,

And loves and lovely laughers, every mood
Sweet as the drops that fell
Of their own anemol

From living lips to cheer the multitude
That feeds on words divine, and grows
More worthy, seeing their world reblossom like
a rose.

48.

Peace, the soft seal of long life's closing story,
 The silent music that no strange note jars,
 Crowned not with gentler hand the years that
 glory
 Crowned, but could hide not all the spiritual scars
 Time writes on the inward strengths of warriors hoary
 With much long warfare, and with gradual bars
 Blindly pent in : but these, being transitory,
 Broke, and the power came back that passion mars :
 And at the lovely last
 Above all anguish past
 Before his own the sightless eyes like stars
 Arose that watched arise
 Like stars in other skies
 Above the strife of ships and hurtling cars
 The Dioscurian songs divine
 That lighten all the world with lightning of their line.

49.

He sang the last of Homer, having sung
 The last of his Ulysses. Bright and wide
 For him time's dark strait ways, like clouds
 that clung
 About the day-star, doubtful to divide,
 Waxed in his spiritual eyeshot, and his tongue
 Spake as his soul bore witness, that desecrated,
 Like those twin towering lights in darkness
 bung,

Homer, and grey Laertes at his side
 Kingly as kings are none
 Beneath a later sun,
 And the sweet maiden ministering in pride
 To sovereign and to sage
 In their more sweet old age :
 These things he sang, himself as old, and
 died.
 And if death be not, if life be,
 As Homer and as Milton are in heaven is he.

50.

Poet whose large-eyed loyalty of love
 Was pure toward all high poets, all their
 kind
 And all bright words and all sweet works
 thereof ;
 Strong like the sun, and like the sunlight
 kind ;
 Heart that no fear but every grief might move
 Wherewith men's hearts were bound of
 powers that bind ;
 The purest soul that ever proof could prove
 From taint of tortuous or of envious mind ;
 Whose eyes clate and clear
 Nor shame nor ever fear
 But only pity or glorious wrath could
 blind ;
 Name set for love apart,
 Held lifelong in my heart,
 Face like a father's toward my face inclined ;
 No gift like thine are mine to give,
 Who by thine own words only bid thee hail,
 and live.

OFF SHORE.

WHEN the might of the summer
 Is most on the sea ;
 When the days overcome her
 With joy but to be,
 With rapture of royal enchantment, and sorcery
 that sets her not free,

But for hours upon hours
 As a thrall she remains
 Spell-bound as with flowers

And content in their chains,
 And her loud steeds fret not, and lift not
 lock of their deep white manes ;

Then only, far under
 In the depths of her hold,
 Some gleam of its wonder
 Man's eye may behold,
 Its wild weed forests of crimson and russet
 and olive and gold.

Still deeper and dimmer
And goodlier they glow
For the eyes of the swimmer
Who scans them below
As he crosses the zone of their flowerage that
knows not of sunshine and snow.

Soft blossomless frondage
And foliage that gleams
As to prisoners in bondage
The light of their dreams,
The desire of a dawn unbeholden, with hope
on the wings of its beams.

Not as prisoners entombed
Waxen haggard and wizen,
But consoled and illumed
In the depths of their prison
With delight of the light everlasting and vision
of dawn on them risen,

From the banks and the beds
Of the waters divine
They lift up their heads
And the flowers of them shine
Through the splendor of darkness that clothes
them of water that glimmers like wine.

Bright bank over bank
Making glorious the gloom,
Soft rank upon rank,
Strange bloom after bloom,
They kindle the liquid low twilight, and dusk
of the dim sea's womb.

Through the subtle and tangible
Gloom without form,
Their branches, infrangible
Ever of storm
Spread softer their sprays than the shoots of the
woodland when April is warm.

As the flight of the thunder, full
Charged with its word,
Dividing the wonderful
Depths like a bird,
Speaks wrath and delight to the heart of the
night that exults to have heard,

So swiftly, though soundless
In silence's ear,
Light, winged from the boundless
Blue depths full of cheer,
Speaks joy to the heart of the waters that part
not before him, but hear.

Light, perfect and visible
Godhead of God,
God indivisible,
Lifts but his rod,
And the shadows are scattered in sunder, and
darkness is light at his nod.

At the touch of his wand,
At the nod of his head
From the spaces beyond
Where the dawn hath her bed,
Earth, water, and air are transfigured, and
rise as one risen from the dead.

He puts forth his hand,
And the mountains are thrilled
To the heart as they stand
In his presence, fulfilled
With his glory that utters his grace upon
earth, and her sorrows are stilled.

The moan of her travail
That groans for the light
Till day-spring unravel
The web of the night,
At the sound of the strings of the music of
morning, falls dumb with delight.

He gives forth his word,
And the word that he saith,
Ere well it be heard,
Strikes darkness to death ;
For the thought of his heart is the sunrise, and
dawn as the sound of his breath.

And the strength of its pulses
That passion makes proud
Confounds and convulses
The depths of the cloud
Of the darkness that heaven was engirt with,
divided and rent as a shroud,

As the veil of the shrine
Of the temple of old
When darkness divine
Over noonday was rolled ;
So the heart of the night by the pulse of the
light is convulsed and controlled.

And the sea's heart, groaning
For glories withdrawn,
And the waves' mouths, moaning
All night for the dawn,
Are uplift as the hearts and the mouths of the
singers on leaside and lawn.

And the sound of the quiring
 Of all these as one,
 Desired and desiring
 Till dawn's will be done,
Fills full with delight of them heaven till it
 burns as the heart of the sun.

Till the waves too inherit
 And waters take part
 In the sense of the spirit
 That breathes from his heart,
And are kindled with music as fire when the
 lips of the morning part,

With music unheard
 In the light of her lips,
 In the life-giving word
 Of the dewfall that drips
On the grasses of earth, and the wind that en-
 kindles the wings of the ships.

White glories of wings
 As of seafaring birds
 That flock from the springs
 Of the sunrise in herbs
With the wind for a herdsman, and hasten or
 halt at the change of his words.

As the watchword's change
 When the wind's note shifts,
 And the skies grow strange,
 And the white squall drifts
Up sharp from the sea-line, vexing the sea
 till the low cloud lifts.

At the charge of his word
 Bidding pause, bidding haste,
 When the ranks are stirred
 And the lines displaced,
They scatter as wild swans parting adrift on
 the wan green waste.

At the hush of his word
 In a pause of his breath
 When the waters have heard
 His will that he saith,
They stand as a flock penned close in its fold
 for division of death.

As a flock by division
 Of death to be thinned,
 As the shades in a vision
 Of spirits that sinned;
So glimmer their shrouds and their sheetings
 as clouds on the stream of the wind.

But the sun stands fast,
 And the sea burns bright,
 And the flight of them past
 Is no more than the flight
 Of the snow-soft swarm of serene wings poised
 and afloat in the light.

Like flowers upon flowers
 In a festival way
 When hours after hours
 Shed grace on the day,
 White blossom-like butterflies hover and gleam
 through the snows of the spray.

Like snow-colored petals
 Of blossoms that flee
 From storm that unsettles
 The flower as the tree
 They flutter, a legion of flowers on the wing,
 through the field of the sea.

Through the furrowless field
 Where the foam-blossoms blow
 And the secrets are sealed
 Of their harvest below
 They float in the path of the sunbeams, as
 flakes or as blossoms of snow.

Till the sea's ways darken,
 And the God, withdrawn,
 Give ear not or hearken
 If prayer on him fawn,
 And the sun's self seem but a shadow, the
 noon as a ghost of the dawn.

No shadow, but rather
 God, father of song,
 Shew grace to me, Father
 God, loved of me long,
 That I lose not the light of thy face, that my
 trust in thee work me not wrong.

While yet I make forward
 With face toward thee
 Not turned yet in shoreward,
 Be thine upon me;
 Be thy light on my forehead or ever I turn
 it again from the sea.

As a kiss on my brow
 Be the light of thy grace,
 Be thy glance on me now
 From the pride of thy place:
 As the sign of a sire to a son be the light on
 my face of thy face,

Thou wast father of olden
 Times hailed and adored,
 And the sense of thy golden
 Great harp's monochord
 Was the joy in the soul of the singers that
 hailed thee for master and lord.

Fair father of all
 In thy ways that have trod,
 That have risen at thy call,
 That have thrilled at thy nod,
 Arise, shine, lighten upon me, O sun that we
 see to be God.

As my soul has been dutiful
 Only to thee,
 O God most beautiful,
 Lighten thou me,
 As I swim through the dim long rollers, with
 eyelids uplift from the sea.

Be praised and adored of us
 All in accord,
 Father and lord of us
 Always adored,
 The slayer and the stayer and the harper, the
 light of us all and our lord.

At the sound of thy lyre,
 At the touch of thy rod,
 Air quickens to fire
 By the foot of thee trod,
 The saviour and healer and singer, the living
 and visible God.

The years are before thee
 As shadows of thee,
 As men that adore thee,
 As cloudlets that flee :
 But thou art the God, and thy kingdom is
 heaven, and thy shrine is the sea.

AFTER NINE YEARS.

TO JOSEPH MAZZINI.

Prima di te mihi, Summa dicende Camenâ.

1.

THE shadows fallen of years are nine
 Since heaven grew seven times more divine
 With thy soul entering, and the dearth
 Of soul on earth
 Grew sevenfold sadder, wanting One
 Whose light of life, quenched here and done,
 Burns there eternal as the sun.

2.

Beyond all word, beyond all deed,
 Beyond all thought beloved, what need
 Hast death or love that speech should be,
 Hast thou of me ?
 I had no word, no prayer, no cry,
 To praise or hail or mourn thee by,
 As when thou too wast man as I.

3.

Nay, never, nor as any born
 Save one whose name priests turn to scorn,
 Who haply, though we know not now,
 Was man as thou,
 A wanderer branded with men's blame,
 Loved past man's utterance : yea, the same,
 Perchance, and as his name thy name.

4.

Thou was as very Christ—not he
 Degraded into Deity,
 And priest-polluted by such prayer
 As poisons air,
 Tongue-worship of the tongue that slays,
 False faith and parricidal praise :
 But the man crowned with suffering days,

478 FOR A PORTRAIT OF FELICE ORSINI.

5.

God only, being of all mankind
Most manlike, of most equal mind
And heart most perfect, more than can
Be heart of man
Once in ten ages, born to be
As haply Christ was, and as we
Knew surely, seeing, and worshipped thee.

6.

To know thee—this at least was ours,
God, clothed upon with human hours,
O face beloved, O spirit adored,

Saviour and lord !

That was not only for thine own
Redeemer—not of these alone
But all to whom thy word was known.

7.

Ten years have wrought their will with me
Since last my words took wing for thee
Who then was' even as now above
Me, and my love.
As then thou knewest not scorn, so now
With that beloved benignant brow
Take these of him whose light was thou.

FOR A PORTRAIT OF FELICE ORSINI.

STRADFAST as sorrow, fiery sad, and sweet
With underthoughts of love and faith, more
strong
Than doubt and hate and all ill thoughts which
throng,
Haply, round hope's or fear's world-wandering
feet
That find no rest from wandering till they meet
Death, bearing palms in hand and crowns of
song ;

His face, who thought to vanquish **wrong**
with wrong,
Erring, and make rage and redemption
meet,
Havoc and freedom ; weaving in one weft
Good with his right hand, evil with his left ;
But all a hero lived and erred and died ;
Looked thus upon the living world he left
So bravely that with pity less than pride
Men hail him Patriot and Tyrannicide.

EVENING ON THE BROADS.

OVER two shadowless waters, adrift as a pin-
nace in peril,
Hangs as in heavy suspense, charged with ir-
resolute light,
Softly the soul of the sunset upholden awhile
on the sterile
Waves and wastes of the land, half repossessed
by the night.
Inland glimmer the shallows asleep and afar in
the breathless

Twilight : yonder the depths darken afar and
asleep.
Slowly the semblance of death out of heaven
descends on the deathless
Waters : hardly the light lives on the face of
the deep—
Hardly, but here for awhile. All over the grey
soft shallow
Hover the colors and clouds of twilight,
void of a star.

As a bird unfledged is the broad-winged night,
whose winglets are callow

Yet, but soon with their plumes will she
cover her brood from afar,

Cover the brood of her worlds that cumber
the skies with their blossom

Thick as the darkness of leaf-shadowed
spring is encumbered with flowers.

World upon world is enwound in the bountiful
girth of her bosom,

Warm and lustrous with life lovely to look on
as ours.

Still is the sunset adrift as a spirit in doubt
that dissembles

Still with itself, being sick of division and
dimmed by dismay—

Nay, not so; but with love and delight beyond
passion it trembles,

Fearful and fain of the night, lovely with
love of the day :

Fain and fearful of rest that is like unto death,
and begotten

Out of the womb of the tomb, born of the
seed of the grave :

Lovely with shadows of loves that are only
not wholly forgotten,

Only not wholly suppressed by the dark as a
wreck by the wave.

Still there linger the loves of the morning and
noon, in a vision

Blindly beheld, but in vain : ghosts that are
tired, and would rest.

But the glories beloved of the night rise all too
dense for division,

Deep in the depth of her breast sheltered as
doves in a nest.

Fainter the beams of the loves of the daylight
season enkindled

Wane, and the memories of hours that were
fair with the love of them fade :

Loftier, aloft of the lights of the sunset stricken
and dwindled,

Gather the signs of the love at the heart of the
night new-made.

New-made night, new-born of the sunset, im-
measurable, endless,

Opens the secret of love hid from of old in
her heart,

In the deep sweet heart full-charged with fault-
less love of the friendless

Spirits of men that are eased when the wheels
of the sun depart.

Still is the sunset afloat as a ship on the waters
upholden

Full-sailed, wide-winged, poised softly forever
away—

Nay, not so, but at least for a little, awhile at
the golden

Limit of arching air fain for an hour to delay.

Here on the bar of the sand-bank, steep yet
aslope to the gleaming

Waste of the water without, waste of the
water within,

Lights overhead and lights underneath seem
doubtfully dreaming

Whether the day be done, whether the night
may begin.

Far and afar and farther again they falter and
hover,

Warm on the water and deep in the sky and
pale on the cloud :

Colder again and slowly remoter, afraid to re-
cover

Breath, yet fain to revive, as it seems, from
the skirt of the shroud.

Faintly the heartbeats shorten and pause of the
light in in the westward

Heaven, as eastward quicken the paces of
star upon star

Hurried and eager of life as a child that strains
to the breast-ward

Eagerly, yearning forth of the deeps where
the ways of them are,

Glad of the glory of the gift of their life and
the wealth of its wonder,

Fain of the night and the sea and the sweet
wan face of the earth.

Over them air grows deeper, intense with de-
light in them : under

Things are thrilled in their sleep as with
sense of a sure new birth.

But here by the sand-bank watching, with eyes
on the sea-line, stranger

Grows to me also the weight of the sea-
ridge gazed on of me,

Heavily heaped up, changefully changeless,
void though of danger

Void not of menace, but full of the might of
the dense dull sea.

Like as the wave is before me, behind is the
bank deep-drifted ;

Yellow and thick as the bank is behind me
in front is the wave.

As the wall of a prison imprisoning the mere
is the girth of it lifted :

But the rampire of water in front is erect as
the wall of a grave.

And the crests of it crumble and topple and
change, but the wall is not broken :

Standing still dry-shod, I see it as higher
than my head,

Moving inland alway again, reared up as in
 token
 Still of impending wrath still in the foam of
 it shed.
 And even in the pauses between them, divid-
 ing the rollers in sunder,
 High overhead seems ever the sea-line fixed
 as a mark,
 And the shore where I stand as a valley behol-
 den of hills whence thunder
 Cloud and torrent and storm, darkening the
 depths of the dark.
 Up to the sea, not upon it or over it, upward
 from under
 Seems he to gaze, whose eyes yearn after it
 here from the shore :
 A wall of turbid water, aslope to the wide
 sky's wonder
 Of color and cloud, it climbs, or spreads as
 a slanted floor.
 And the large lights change on the face of the
 mere like things that were living,
 Winged and wonderful, beams like as birds
 are that pass and are free :
 But the light is dense as darkness, a gift with-
 held in the giving,
 That lies as dead on the fierce dull face of the
 landward sea.
 Stained and stifed and soiled, made earthier
 than earth is and duller,
 Grimly she puts back light as rejected, a
 thing put away :
 No transparent rapture, a molten music of
 color ;
 No translucent love taken and given of the
 day.
 Fettered and marred and begrimed is the light's
 live self on her falling,
 As the light of a man's life lighted the fume
 of a dungeon mars :
 Only she knows of the wind, when her wrath
 gives ear to him calling ;
 The delight of the light she knows not, nor
 answers the sun or the stars.
 Love she hath none to return for the luminous
 love of their giving :
 None to reflect from the bitter and shallow
 response of her heart.
 Yearly she feeds on her dead, yet herself seems
 dead and not living,
 Or confused as a soul heavy-laden with
 trouble that will not depart.
 In the sound of her speech to the darkness the
 moan of her evil remorse is,
 Haply, for strong ships gnawed by the dog-
 toothed sea-bank's fang
 And trampled to death by the rage of the feet
 of her foam-lipped horses
 Whose manes are yellow as plague, and as
 ensigns of pestilence hang,
 That wave in the foul faint air of the breath of
 a death-stricken city ;
 So menacing heaves she the manes of her
 rollers knotted with sand,
 Discolored, opaque, suspended in sign as of
 strength without pity,
 That shake with flameless thunder the low
 long length of the strand.
 Here, far off in the farther extreme of the shore
 as it lengthens
 Northward, lonely for miles, ere ever a
 village begin,
 On the lapsing land that recedes as the growth
 of the strong sea strengthens
 Shoreward, thrusting further and further its
 outworks in,
 Here in Shakespeare's vision, a flower of her
 kin forsaken,
 Lay in her golden raiment alone on the wild
 wave's edge,
 Surely by no shore else, but here on the bank
 storm-shaken,
 Perdita, bright as a dew-drop engilt of the sun
 on the sedge.
 Here on a shore unbelied of his eyes in a
 dream he beheld her
 Outcast, fair as a fairy, the child of a far-off
 king :
 And over the babe-flower gently the head of a
 pastoral elder
 Bowed, compassionate, hoar as the hawthorn-
 blossom in spring,
 And kind as harvest in autumn : a shelter of
 shade on the lonely
 Shelterless unknown shore scourged of im-
 placable waves :
 Here, where the wind walks royal, alone in his
 kingdom, and only
 Sounds to the sedges a wail as of triumph
 that conquers and craves.
 All these waters and wastes are his empire of
 old, and awaken
 From barren and stagnant slumber at only
 the sound of his breath :
 Yet the hunger is eased not that aches in his
 heart, nor the goal overtaken
 That his wide wings yearn for and labor as
 hearts that yearn after death.
 All the solitude sighs and expects with a blind
 expectation
 Somewhat unknown of its own sad heart,
 grown heart-sick of strife :

Till sometime its wild heart maddens, and
 moans, and the vast ululation
 Takes wing with the clouds on the water,
 and wails to be quit of its life.
 For the spirit and soul of the waste is the wind,
 and his wings with their waving
 Darken and lighten the darkness and light
 of it thickened or thinned,
 But the heart that impels them is even as a
 conqueror's insatiably craving
 That victory can fill not, as power cannot
 satiate the want of the wind.
 All these moorlands and marshes are full of
 his might, and oppose not
 Aught of defence nor of barrier, of forest or
 precipice piled :
 But the will of the wind works ever as his that
 desires what he knows not,

And the wail of his want unfulfilled is as one
 making moan for her child.
 And the cry of his triumph is even as the cry-
 ing of hunger that maddens
 The heart of a strong man aching in vain as
 the wind's heart aches :
 And the sadness itself of the land for its in-
 finite solitude saddens
 More for the sound than the silence athirst
 for the sound that slakes.
 And the sunset at last and the twilight are
 dead : and the darkness is breathless
 With fear of the wind's breath rising that
 seems and seems not to sleep :
 But a sense of the sound of it always, a spirit
 unsleeping and deathless,
 Ghost or God, evermore moves on the face
 of the deep.

THE EMPEROR'S PROGRESS.

A STUDY IN THREE STAGES.

(On the Busts of Nero in the Uffizj.)

I.

A CHILD of brighter than the morning's birth
 And lovelier than all smiles that may be
 smiled
 Save only of little children undefiled,
 Sweet, perfect, witless of their own dear worth,
 Live rose of love, mute melody of mirth,
 Glad as a bird is when the woods are mild,
 Adorable as is nothing save a child,
 Hails with wide eyes and lips his life on earth,
 His lovely life with all its heaven to be.
 And whoso reads the name inscribed or hears
 Feels his own heart a frozen well of tears,
 Child, for deep dread and fearful pity of thee
 Whom God would not let rather die than see
 The incumbent horror of impending years.

II.

Man, that wast godlike being a child, and
 now,
 No less than gringlike, art no more in sooth
 For all thy grace and lordliness of youth,

The crown that bids men's branded foreheads
 bow
 Much more has branded and bowed down thy
 brow
 And gnawn upon it as with fire or tooth
 Of steel or snake so sorely, that the truth
 Seems here to bear false witness. Is it thou,
 Child ? and is all the summer of all thy spring
 This ? are the smiles that drew men's kisses
 down
 All faded and transfigured to the frown
 That grieves thy face ? Art thou this weary
 thing ?
 Then is no slave's load heavier than a crown
 And such a thrall no bondman as a king.

III.

Misery, beyond all men's most miserable,
 Absolute, whole, defiant of defence,
 Inevitable, inexplicable, intense,
 More vast than heaven is high, more deep than
 hell,
 Past cure or charm of solace or of spell,

Possesses and pervades the spirit and
 sense
 Whereto the expanse of the earth pays tribute;
 whence
 Breeds evil only, and broods on fumes that
 swell
 Rank from the blood of brother and mother
 and wife.

'Misery of miseries, all is misery,
 saith
 The heavy fair-faced hateful head, at strife
 With its own lusts that burn with feverous
 breath
 Lips which the loathsome bitterness of
 life
 Leaves fearful of the bitterness of death.

THE RESURRECTION OF ALCILIA.

(Gratefully inscribed to Dr. A. B. Grosart.)

SWEET song-flower of the Mayspring of our
 song,
 Be welcome to us, with loving thanks and
 praise
 To his good hand who travelling on strange
 ways
 Found thee forlorn and fragrant, lain along
 Beneath dead leaves that many a winter's wrong
 Had rained and heaped through nigh three
 centuries' maze

Above thy Maybloom, hiding from our gaze
 The life that in thy leaves lay sweet and strong.
 For thine have life, while many above thine
 head
 Piled by the wind lie blossomless and dead.
 So now disburdened of such load above
 That lay as death's own dust upon thee shed
 By days too deaf to hear thee like a dove
 Murmuring, we hear thee, bird and flower of
 love.

THE FOURTEENTH OF JULY.

(On the refusal by the French Senate of the plenary amnesty demanded by Victor Hugo, in his speech
 of July 3rd, for the surviving exiles of the Commune.)

THOU shouldst have risen as never dawn yet
 rose,
 Day of the sunrise of the soul of France,
 Dawn of the whole world's morning, when
 the trance
 Of all the world had end, and all its woes
 Respite, prophetic of their perfect close.
 Light of all tribes of men, all names and
 clans,
 Dawn of the whole world's morning and of
 man's,

Flower of the heart of morning's mystic rose,
 Dawn of the very dawn of very day,
 When the sun brighter breaks night's ruin-
 ous prison,
 Thou shouldst have risen as yet no dawn
 has risen,
 Evoked of him whose word puts night away,
 Our father, at the music of whose word
 Exile had ended, and the world had heard.

July 5, 1880.

THE LAUNCH OF THE LIVADIA.

I.

GOLD, and fair marbles, and again more gold,
 And space of halls afloat that glance and gleam
 Like the green heights of sunset heaven, or seem
 The golden steeps of sunrise red and cold
 On deserts where dark exile keeps the fold
 Fast of the flocks of torment, where no beam
 Falls of kind light or comfort save in dream,
 These we far off behold not, who behold
 The cordage woven of curses, and the decks
 With mortal hate and mortal peril paven ;
 From stem to stern the lines of doom engraven
 That mark for sure inevitable wrecks
 Those sails predestinate, though no storm vex,
 To miss on earth and find in hell their haven.

II.

All curses be about her, and all ill
 Go with her ; heaven be dark above her way,
 The gulf beneath her glad and sure of prey,
 And, wheresoe'er her prow be pointed, still
 The winds of heaven have all one evil will
 Conspirant even as hearts of kings to slay
 With mouths of kings to lie and smile and pray,
 And chieftiest his whose wintrier breath makes chill

With more than winter's and more poisonous cold
 The horror of his kingdom toward the north,
 The deserts of his kingdom toward the east.
 And though death hide not in her direful hold
 Be all stars adverse toward her that come forth
 Nightly, by day all hours till all have ceased :

III.

Till all have ceased for ever, and the sum
 Be summed of all the sunless curses told
 Out on his head by all dark seasons rolled
 Over its cursed and crowned existence, dumb
 And blind and stark as though the snows made numb
 All sense within it, and all conscience cold,
 That hangs round hearts of less imperial mold
 Like a snake feeding till their doomday come.
 O heart fast bound of frozen poison, be
 All nature's as all true men's hearts to thee,
 A two-edged sword of judgment ; hope be far
 And fear at hand for pilot oversea
 With death for compass and despair for star,
 And the white foam a shroud for the White Czar.

September 30, 1880.

SIX YEARS OLD.

To H. W. M.

BETWEEN the springs of six and seven,
 Two fresh years' fountains, clear
 Of all but golden sand for leaven,
 Child, midway passing here,
 As earth for love's sake dares bless heaven,
 So dare I bless you, dear.

Between two bright well-heads, that brighten
 With every breath that blows
 Too loud to lull, too low to frighten,
 But fain to rock, the rose,
 Your feet stand fast, your lit smiles lighten,
 That might rear flowers from snows.

You came when winds unleashed were snarling
 Behind the frost-bound hours,
 A snow-bird sturdier than the stalling,
 A storm-bird fledged for showers,
 That spring might smile to find you, dar-
 ling,
 First born of all the flowers.

Could love make worthy things of worthless,
 My song were worth an ear :
 Its note should make the days most mirthless
 The merriest of the year,
 And wake to birth all buds yet birthless
 To keep your birthday, dear.

But where your birthday brightens heaven
 No need has earth, God knows,
 Of light or warmth to melt or leaven
 The frost or fog that glows
 With sevenfold heavenly lights of seven
 Sweet springs that cleave the snows.

Could love make worthy music of you,
 And match my Master's powers,
 Had even my love less heart to love you,
 A better song were ours ;
 With all the rhymes like stars above you,
 And all the words like flowers.

September 30, 1880.

A PARTING SONG.

(To a friend leaving England for a year's residence in Australia.)

THESE winds and suns of spring
 That warm with breath and wing
 The trembling sleep of earth, till half awake
 She laughs and blushes ere her slumber break,
 For all good gifts they bring
 Require one better thing,
 For all the loans of joy they lend us, borrow
 One sharper dole of sorrow,
 To sunder soon by half a world of sea
 Her son from England and my friend from me.

Nor hope nor love nor fear
 May speed or stay one year,
 Nor song nor prayer may bid, as mine would
 fain,
 The seasons perish and be born again,
 Restoring all we lend,
 Reluctant, of a friend,
 The voice, the hand, the presence and the
 sight
 That lend their life and light
 To present gladness and heart-strengthening
 cheer,
 Now lent again for one reluctant year.

So much we lend indeed,
 Perforce, by force of need,
 So much we must ; even these things and no
 more
 The far sea sundering and the sundered shore

A world apart from ours,
 So much the imperious hours,
 Exact and spare not ; but no more than these
 All earth and all her seas
 From thought and faith of trust and truth can
 borrow,
 Not memory from desire, nor hope from sor-
 row.

Through bright and dark and bright
 Returns of day and night
 I bid the swift year speed and change and give
 His breath of life to make the next year live
 With sunnier suns for us
 A life more prosperous,
 And laugh with flowers more fragrant, that
 shall see
 A merrier March for me,
 A rosier-girdled race of night with day,
 A goodlier April and a tenderer May.
 For him the invested year
 Shall mark our seasons here
 With alien alternation, and revive
 This withered winter, slaying the spring alive
 With darts more sharply drawn
 As nearer draws the dawn
 In heaven transfigured over earth transformed
 And with our winters warmed
 And wasted with our summers, till the beams
 Rise on his face that rose on Dante's dreams.

Till fourfold morning rise
Of starshine on his eyes,
Dawn of the spheres that brand steep heaven
 across
At height of night with semblance of a cross
 Whose grace and ghostly glory
 Poured heaven on purgatory
Seeing with their flamelets risen all heaven
 grow glad
For love thereof it had
And lovely joy of loving ; so may these
Make bright with welcome now their southern
 seas.

O happy stars, whose mirth
The saddest soul on earth [bless,
That ever soared and sang found strong to
Lightening his life's harsh load of heaviness
 With comfort sown like seed
 In dream though not in deed [vine,
On sprinkled wastes of darkling thought di-
Let all your lights now shine
With all as glorious gladness on his eyes
For whom in deed and not in dream they rise.

As those great twins of air
Hailed once with oldworld prayer
Of all folk always faring forth by sea,
So now may these for grace and guidance be,
 To guard his sail and bring
 Again to brighten spring

The face we look for and the hand we lack
Still, till they light him back,
As welcome as to first discovering eyes
Their light rose ever, soon on his to rise.

As parting now he goes
From snow-time back to snows,
So back to spring from summer may next year
Restore him, and our hearts receive him here,
 The best good gift that spring
 Had ever grace to bring
At fortune's happiest hour of star-blest birth,
Back to love's homebright earth,
To eyes with eyes that commune, hand with
 hand,
And the old warm bosom of all our mother-
 land.

Earth and sea-wind and sea
And stars and sunlight be
Alike all prosperous for him, and all hours
Have all one heart, and all that heart as ours.
 All things as good as strange
 Crown all the season's change
With changing flower and compensating fruit
From one year's ripening root ;
Till next year brings us, roused at spring's
 recall,
A heartier flower and goodlier fruit than all.

March 26, 1880.

BY THE NORTH SEA.

'We are what suns and winds and waters make us'—LANDOR.

SEA, wind and sun, with light and sound and breath
The spirit of man fulfilling—these create
That joy wherewith man's life grown passionate
Gains heart to hear and sense to read and faith
To know the secret word our Mother saith
In silence, and to see, though doubt roars great
Death as the shadow cast by life on fate,
Passing, whose shade we call the shadow of death.

Brother, to whom our Mother as to me
Is dearer than all dreams of days undone,
This song I give you of the sovereign three
That are as life and sleep and death are, one :
A song the sea-wind gave me from the sea
Where naught of man's endures before the sun.

BY THE NORTH SEA.

I

1.

A LAND that is lonelier than ruin ;
 A sea that is stranger than death :
 Far fields that a rose never blew in,
 Wan waste where the winds lack breath ;
 Waste endless and boundless and flowerless
 But of marsh-blossoms fruitless as free :
 Where earth lies exhausted, as powerless
 To strive with the sea.

2.

Far flickers the flight of the swallows,
 Far flutters the weft of the grass
 Spun dense over desolate hollows
 More pale than the clouds as they pass :
 Thick woven as the weft of a witch is
 Round the heart of a thrall that hath sinned,
 Whose youth and the wrecks of its riches
 Are waifs on the wind.

3.

The pastures are herdless and sheepless
 No pasture or shelter for herds :
 The wind is relentless and sleepless
 And restless and songless the birds ;
 Their cries from afar fall breathless,
 Their wings are as lightnings that flee ;
 For the land has two lords that are deathless :
 Death's self, and the sea.

4.

These twain, as a king with his fellow,
 Hold converse of desolate speech :
 And her waters are haggard and yellow
 And crass with the scurf of the beach :
 And his garments are grey as the hoary
 Wan sky where the day lies dim :
 And his power is to her, and his glory,
 As hers unto him.

5.

In the pride of his power she rejoices,
 In her glory he glows and is glad :
 In her darkness the sound of his voice is,
 With his breath she dilates and is mad :
 'If thou slay me, O death, and outlive me,
 Yet thy love hath fulfilled me of thee.'
 'Shall I give thee not back if thou give me,
 O sister, O sea ?'

6.

And year upon year dawns living,
 And age upon age drops dead :
 And his hand is not weary of giving,
 And the thirst of her heart is not fed :
 And the hunger that moans in her passion,
 And the rage in her hunger that roars,
 A wolf's that the winter lays lash on,
 Still calls and implores.

7.

Her walls have no granite for girder,
 No fortalice fronting her stands :
 But reefs the bloodguiltiest of murder
 Are less than the banks of her sands :
 These number their slain by the thousand ;
 For the ship hath no surety to be,
 When the bank is abreast of her bows and
 Adush with the sea.

8.

No surety to stand, and no shelter
 To dawn out of darkness but one,
 Out of waters that hurtle and welter
 No succor to dawn with the sun
 But a rest from the wind as it passes,
 Where, hardly redeemed from the waves,
 Lie thick as the blades of the grasses
 The dead in their graves.

9.

A multitude noteless of numbers,
 As wild weeds cast on an heap :
 And sounder than sleep are their slumbers,
 And softer than song is their sleep ;
 And sweeter than all things and stranger
 The sense, if perchance it may be,
 That the wind is divested of danger
 And scatheless the sea.

10.

That the roar of the banks they breasted
 Is hurtless as bellowing of herds,
 And the strength of his wings that invested
 The wind, as the strength of a bird's ;
 As the sea-mew's might or the swallow's
 That cry to him back if he cries,
 As over the graves and their hollows
 Days darken and rise.

11.

As the souls of the dead men disburdened
 And clean of the sins that they sinned,
 With a lovelier than man's life guarded
 And delight as a wave's in the wind,
 And delight as the wind's in the billow,
 Birds pass, and deride with their glee
 The flesh that has dust for its pillow
 As wrecks have the sea.

12.

When the days of the sun wax dimmer,
 Wings flash through the dusk like beams ;
 As the clouds in the lit sky glimmer,
 The bird in the graveyard gleams ;

As the cloud at its wing's edge whitens
 When the clarions of sunrise are heard,
 The graves that the bird's note brightens
 Grow bright for the bird.

13.

As the waves of the numberless waters
 That the wind cannot number who guides
 Are the sons of the shore and the daughters
 Here lulled by the chime of the tides :
 And here in the press of them standing
 We know not if these or if we
 Live truest, or anchored to landing
 Or drifted to sea.

14.

In the valley he named of decision
 No denser were multitudes met
 When the soul of the seer in her vision
 Saw nations for doom of them set ;
 Saw darkness in dawn, and the splendor
 Of judgment, the sword and the rod ;
 But the doom here of death is more tender
 And gentler the god.

15.

And gentler the wind from the dreary
 Sea-banks by the waves overlapped,
 Being weary, speaks peace to the weary
 From slopes that the tide-stream hath
 sapped ;
 And sweeter than all that we call so
 The seal of their slumber shall be
 Till the graves that embosom them also
 Be sapped of the sea.

II.

1.

For the heart of the waters is cruel,
 And the kisses are dire of their lips,
 And their waves are as fire is to fuel
 To the strength of the sea-faring ships,
 Though the sea's eye gleam as a jewel
 To the sun's eye back as he dips.

2.

Though the sun's eye flash to the sea's
 Live light of delight and of laughter,
 And her lips breathe back to the breeze
 The kiss that the wind's lips waft her
 From the sun that subsides, and sees
 No gleam of the storm's dawn after,

3.

And the wastes of the wild sea-marches
 Where the borderers are matched in their
 might—
 Bleak fens that the sun's weight parches,
 Dense waves that reject his light—
 Change under the change-colored arches
 Of changeless morning and night.

4.

The waves are as ranks enrolled
 Too close for the storm to sever :
 The fens lie naked and cold,
 But their heart fails utterly never ;
 The lists are set from of old,
 And the warfare endureth for ever.

III.

1.

Miles, and miles, and miles of desolation !
 Leagues on leagues on leagues without a
 change !
 Sign or token of some eldest nation
 Here would make the strange land not so
 strange.
 Time-forgotten, yea since time's creation,
 Seem these borders where the sea-birds
 range.

2.

Slowly, gladly, full of peace and wonder
 Grows his heart who journeys here alone.
 Earth and all its thoughts of earth sink under
 Deep as deep in water sinks a stone.
 Hardly knows it if the rollers thunder,
 Hardly whence the lonely wind is blown.

3.

Tall the plumage of the rush-flower tosses,
 Sharp and soft in many a curve and line
 Gleam and glow the sea-colored marsh-mosses,
 Salt and splendid from the circling brine.
 Streak on streak of glimmering seashine
 crosses
 All the land sea-saturate as with wine.

4.

Far, and far between, in divers orders,
 Clear grey steeples cleave the low grey sky ;
 Fast and firm as time-unshaken warders,
 Hearts made sure by faith, by hope made
 high.
 These alone in all the wild sea-borders
 Fear no blast of days and nights that die.

5.

All the land is like as one man's face is,
 Pale and troubled still with change of cares.
 Doubt and death pervade her clouded spaces :
 Strength and length of life and peace are
 theirs ;
 Theirs alone amid these weary places,
 Seeing not how the wild world frets and fares.

6.

Firm and fast where all is cloud that changes
 Cloud-clogged sunlight, cloud by sunlight
 thinned,
 Stern and sweet, above the sand-hill ranges
 Watch the towers and tombs of men that
 sinned
 Once, now calm as earth whose only change is
 Wind, and light, and wind and cloud, and
 wind.

7.

Out and in and out the sharp straits wander,
 In and out and in the wild way strives,
 Starred and paved and lined with flowers that
 squander
 Gold as golden as the gold of hives,
 Salt and moist and multiform : but yonder,
 See, what sign of life or death survives ?

8.

Seen then only when the songs of olden
 Harps where young whose echoes yet endure,
 Hymned of Homer when his years were golden,
 Known of only when the world was pure,
 Here is Hades, manifest, beholden,
 Surely, surely here, if aught be sure !

9.

Where the border-line was crossed, that, sun-
dering

Death from life, keeps weariness from rest,
None can tell, who fares hereforward wondering;
None may doubt but here might end his quest.

Here life's lightning joys and woes once thun-
dering

Sea-like round him cease like storm sup-
pressed.

Here the wise wave-wandering steadfast-heart-
ed

Guest of many a lord of many a land
Saw the shape or shade of years departed,

Saw the semblance risen and hard at hand,
Saw the mother long from love's reach parted,
Anticleia, like a statue stand.

11.

Statue? nay, nor tissued image woven

Fair on hangings in his father's hall;

Nay, too fast her faith of heart was proven,

Far too firm her loveliest love of all;

Love wherethrough the loving heart was cloven,

Love that hears not when the loud Fates call.

12.

Love that lives and stands up re-created

Then when life has ebbd and anguish fled;

Love more strong than death or all things
fated,

Child's and mother's, lit by love and led;
Love that found what life so long awaited
Here, when life came down among the
dead.

13.

Here, where never came alive another,

Came her sod across the sundering tide

Crossed before by many a warrior brother

Once that warred on Ilion at his side;

Here spread forth vain hands to clasp the
mother

Dread, that sorrowing for his love's sake
died.

14.

Parted, though by narrowest of divisions,

Clasp he might not, only might implore.

Sundered yet by bitterest of derisions,

Son, and mother from the son she bore—

Here? But all dispeopled here of visions

Lies, forlorn of shadows even, the shore.

15.

All too sweet such men's Hellenic speech is

All too fain they lived of light to see,

Once to see the darkness of these beaches,

Once to sing this Hades found of me

Ghostless, all its gulfs and creeks and reaches,

Sky, and shore, and cloud, and waste, and
sea.

IV.

1.

But aloft and afront of me faring

Far forward as folk in a dream

That strive, between doubting and daring,

Right on till the goal for them gleam,

Full forth till their goal on them lighten,

The harbor where fain they would be,

What headlands there darken and brighten?

What change in the sea?

2.

What houses and woodlands that nestle

Save inland to lee of the hill

As it slopes from the headlands that wrestle

And succumb to the strong sea's will?

Truce is not, nor respite, nor pity,

For the battle is waged not of hands

Where over the grave of a city

The ghost of it stands.

3.

Where the wings of the sea-wind slacken,

Green lawns to the landward thrive,

Fields brighten and pine-woods blacken,

And the heat in their heart is alive;

They blossom and warble and murmur,

For the sense of their spirit is free:

But harder to shoreward and firmer

The grasp of the sea.

4.

Like ashes the low cliffs crumble,
 The banks drop down into dust,
 The heights of the hills are made humble,
 As a reed's is the strength of their trust :
 As a city's that armies environ,
 The strength of their stay is of sand :
 But the grasp of the sea is as iron,
 Laid hard on the land.

5.

A land that is thirstier than ruin :
 A sea that is hungrier than death ;
 Heaped hills that a tree never grew in ;
 Wide sands where the wave draws breath ;
 All solace is here for the spirit
 That ever for ever may be
 For the soul of thy son to inherit
 My mother, my sea.

6.

O delight of the headlands and beaches !
 O desire of the wind on the wold,
 More glad than a man's when it reaches
 That end which it sought from of old
 And the palm of possession is dreary
 To the sense that in search of it sinned ;
 But nor satisfied ever nor weary
 Is ever the wind.

7.

The delight that he takes but in living
 Is more than of all things that live :
 For the world that has all things for giving
 Has nothing so goodly to give :
 But more than delight his desire is,
 For the goal where his pinions would be
 Is immortal as air or as fire is,
 Immense as the sea.

8.

Though hence come the moan that he borrows
 From darkness and depth of the night,
 Though hence be the spring of his sorrows,
 Hence too is the joy of his might ;
 The delight that his doom is for ever
 To seek and desire and rejoice,
 And the sense that eternity never
 Shall silence his voice.

9.

That satiety never may stifle
 Nor weariness ever estrange
 Nor time be so strong as to rife
 Nor change be so great as to change
 His gift that renews in the giving,
 The joy that exalts him to be
 Alone of all elements living
 The lord of the sea.

10.

What is fire, that its flame should consume
 her ?
 More fierce than all fires are her waves :
 What is earth, that its gulfs should entomb
 her ?
 More deep are her own than their graves.
 Life shrinks from his pinions that cover
 The darkness by thunders bedinned :
 But she knows him, her lord and her lover,
 The godhead of wind.

11.

For a season his wings are about her,
 His breath on her lips for a space ;
 Such rapture he wins not without her
 In the width of his worldwide race.
 Though the forests bow down, and the moun-
 tains
 Wax dark, and the tribes of them flee,
 His delight is more deep in the fountains
 And springs of the sea.

12.

There are those too of mortals that love him,
 There are souls that desire and require,
 Be the glories of midnight above him
 Or beneath him the daysprings of fire :
 And their hearts are as harps that approve him
 And praise him as chords of a lyre
 That were fain with their music to move him
 To meet their desire.

13.

To descend through the darkness to grace
 them,
 Till darkness were lovelier than light :
 To encompass and grasp and embrace them,
 Till their weakness were one with his might ;
 With the strength of his wings to caress them,

With the blast of his breath to set free ;
With the mouths of his thunders to bless them
For sons of the sea.

14.

For these have the toil and the guerdon
That the wind has eternally : these
Have part in the boon and the burden
Of the sleepless unsatisfied breeze,
That finds not, but seeking rejoices
That possession can work him no wrong :

And the voice at the heart of their voice is
The sense of his song.

15.

For the wind's is their doom and their blessing ;
To desire, and have always above
A possession beyond their possessing,
A love beyond reach of their love.
Green earth has her sons and her daughters,
And these have their guerdons ; but we
Are the wind's and the sun's and the water's,
Elect of the sea.

V.

1.

For the sea too seeks and rejoices,
Gains and loses and gains,
And the joy of her heart's own choice is
As ours, and as ours are her pains :
As the thoughts of our hearts are her voices,
And as hers is the pulse of our veins.

2.

Her fields that know not of dearth
Nor lie for their fruit's sake fallow
Laugh large in the depth of their mirth :
But inshore here in the shallow,
Embroiled with encumbrance of earth,
Their skirts are turbid and yellow.

3.

The grime of her greed is upon her
The sign of her deed is her soil ;
As the earth's is her own dishonor,
And corruption the crown of her toil :
She hath spoiled and devoured, and her honor
Is this, to be shamed by her spoil.

4.

But afar where pollution is none,
Nor ensign of strife nor endeavor,
Where her heart and the sun's are one,
And the soil of her sin comes never,
She is pure as the wind and the sun,
And her sweetness endureth for ever.

VI.

1.

Death, and change, and darkness everlasting,
Deaf, that hears not what the daystar saith,
Blind, past all remembrance and forecasting,
Dead, past memory that it once drew breath ;
These, above the washing tides and wasting,
Reign, and rule this land of utter death.

2.

Change of change, darkness of darkness, hidden,
Very death of very death, begun
When none knows,—the knowledge is for-
bidden--

Self-begotten, self-proceeding, one,
Born, not made—abhorred, unchained, unchid-
den,
Night stands here defiant of the sun.

3.

Change of change, and death of death begotten,
Darkness born of darkness, one and three,
Ghostly godhead of a world forgotten,
Crowned with heaven, enthroned on land and
sea,
Here, where earth with dead men's bones is
rotten,
God of Time, thy likeness worships thee.

4.

Lo, thy likeness of thy desolation,
 Shape and figure of thy might, O Lord,
 Formless form, incarnate miscreation
 Served of all things living and abhorred ;
 Earth herself is here thine incarnation,
 Time of all things born on earth abored.

5.

All that worship thee are fearful of thee ;
 No man may not worship thee for fear :
 Prayers nor curses prove not nor disprove thee,
 Move nor change thee with our change of
 cheer :
 All at last, though all abhorred thee, love thee,
 God, the sceptre of whose throne is here.

6.

Here thy throne and sceptre of thy station,
 Here the palace paven for thy feet ;
 Here thy sign from nation unto nation
 Passed as watchword for thy guards to greet,
 Guards that go before thine exaltation,
 Ages, clothed with bitter years and sweet.

7.

Here, where sharp the sea-bird shrills his ditty,
 Flickering flame-wise through the clear live
 calm,
 Rose triumphal, crowning all a city,
 Roofs exalted once with prayer and psalm,
 Built of holy hands for holy pity,
 Frank and fruitful as a sheltering palm.

8.

Church and hospice wrought in faultless fashion,
 Hall and chancel bounteous and sublime,
 Wide and sweet and glorious as compassion,
 Filled and thrilled with force of choral chime,
 Filled with spirit of prayer and thrilled with
 passion,
 Hailed a God more merciful than Time.

9.

Ah, less mighty, less than Time prevailing,
 Shrunk, expelled, made nothing at his nod,
 Less than clouds across the sea-line sailing,
 Lies he, stricken by his master's rod.

'Where is man?' the cloister murmurs wailing ;
 Back the mute shrine thunders—'Where is
 God?'

10.

Here is all the end of all his glory—
 Dust, and grass, and barren silent stones.
 Dead, like him, one hollow tower and hoary
 Naked in the sea-wind stands and moans,
 Filled and thrilled with its perpetual story :
 Here, where earth is dense with dead men's
 bones.

11.

Low and loud and long, a voice for ever,
 Sounds the wind's clear story like a song.
 Tomb from tomb the waves devouring sever,
 Dust from dust as years relapse along ;
 Graves where men made sure to rest, and never
 Lie dismantled by the seasons' wrong.

12.

Now displaced, devoured and desecrated,
 Now by Time's hands darkly disinterred,
 These poor dead that sleeping here awaited
 Long the archangel's re-creating word,
 Closed about with roofs and walls high-gated
 Till the blast of judgment should be heard,

13.

Naked, shamed, cast out of consecration,
 Corpse and coffin, yea the very graves,
 Scoffed at, scattered, shaken from their station,
 Spurned and scourged of wind and sea
 like slaves,
 Desolate beyond man's desolation,
 Shrink and sink into the waste of waves.

14.

Tombs, with bare white piteous bones protruded,
 Shroudless, down the loose collapsing banks,
 Crumble, from their constant place detrued,
 That the sea devours and gives not thanks.
 Graves where hope and prayer and sorrow
 brooded
 Gape and slide and perish, ranks on ranks.

15.

Rows on rows and line by line they crumble,
 They that thought for all time through to be.
 Scarce a stone whereon a child might stumble

Breaks the grim field paced alone of me.
 Earth, and man, and all their gods wax
 humble,
 Here, where Time brings pasture to the sea.

VII.

1.

But afar on the headland exalted,
 But beyond in the curl of the bay,
 From the depth of his dome deep-vaulted
 Our father is lord of the day.
 Our father and lord that we follow,
 For deathless and ageless is he ;
 And his robe is the whole sky's hollow,
 His sandal the sea.

2.

Where the horn of the headland is sharper.
 And her green floor glitters with fire,
 The sea has the sun for a harper,
 The sun has the sea for a lyre.
 The waves are a pavement of amber,
 By the feet of the sea-winds trod
 To receive in a god's presence-chamber
 Our father, the God.

3.

Time, haggard and changeful and hoary,
 Is master and God of the land :
 But the air is fulfilled of the glory
 That is shed from our lord's right hand.
 O father of all of us ever,
 All glory be only to thee
 From heaven, that is void of thee never
 And earth, and the sea.

4.

O Sun, whereof all is beholden,
 Behold now the shadow of this death,
 This place of the sepulchres, olden

And emptied and vain as a breath.
 The bloom of the bountiful heather
 Laughs broadly beyond in thy light,
 As dawn, with her glories to gather,
 At darkness and night.

5.

Though the Gods of the night lie rotten
 And their honor be taken away
 And the noise of their names forgotten,
 Thou, Lord, art God of the day.
 Thou art father and saviour and spirit,
 O Sun, of the soul that is free
 And hath grace of thy grace to inherit
 Thine earth and thy sea.

6.

The hills and the sands and the beaches,
 The waters adrift and afar,
 The banks and the creeks and the reaches,
 How glad of thee all these are !
 The flowers, overflowing, overcrowded,
 Are drunk with the mad wind's mirth :
 The delight of thy coming unclouded
 Makes music of earth.

7

I, last least voice of her voices,
 Give thanks that were mute in me long
 To the soul in my soul that rejoices
 For the song that is over my song.
 Time gives what he gains for the giving
 Or takes for his tribute of me ;
 My dreams to the wind everliving,
 My song to the sea.

GRAND CHORUS OF BIRDS FROM ARISTOPHANES ATTEMPTED IN ENGLISH AFTER THE ORIGINAL METRE.

[I was allured into the audacity of this experiment by consideration of a fact which hitherto does not seem to have been taken into consideration by any translator of the half divine humourist in whose incomparable *genius* the highest qualities of Rabelais were fused and harmonized with the supremest gifts of Shelley : namely that his marvellous metrical invention of the anapaestic heptameter was almost exactly reproducible in a language to which all variations and combinations of anapaestic, iambic, or trochaic metre are as natural and pliable as all dactylic and spondaic forms of verse are unnatural and abhorrent. As it happens, this highest central interlude of a most adorable masterpiece is as easy to detach from its dramatic setting, and even from its lyrical context, as it was easy to give line for line of it in English. In two metrical points only does my version vary from the verbal pattern of the original. I have of course added rhymes, and double rhymes, as necessary makeweights for the imperfection of an otherwise inadequate language ; and equally of course I have not attempted the impossible and undesirable task of reproducing the rare exceptional effect of a line overcharged on purpose with a preponderance of heavy-footed spondees : and this for the obvious reason that even if such a line—which I doubt—could be exactly represented, foot by foot and pause for pause, in English, this English line would no more be a verse in any proper sense of the word than is the line I am writing at this moment. And my main intention, or at least my main desire, in the undertaking of this brief adventure was to renew as far as possible for English ears the music of this resonant and triumphant metre, which goes ringing at full gallop as of horses who

‘dance as ’twere to the music

Their own hoofs make.’

I would not seem over curious in search of an apt or an inapt quotation ; but nothing can be fitter than a verse of Shakspeare's to praise at once and to describe the most typical verse of Aristophanes.]

(*The Birds*, 685-723.)

COME on then, ye dwellers by nature in darkness,
 and like to the leaves' generations,
 That are little of might, that are moulded of
 mire, unending and shadowlike nations,
 Poor plumelless ephemerals, comfortless mortals,
 as visions of shadows fast fleeing,
 Lift up your mind unto us that are deathless, and
 dateless the date of our being :
 Us, children of heaven, us, ageless for aye, us,
 all of whose thoughts are eternal ;
 That ye may from henceforth, having heard of
 us all things aright as to matters supernal,
 Of the being of birds and beginning of gods,
 and of streams, and the dark beyond
 reaching,
 Truthfully knowing aright, in my name bid
 Prodicus pack with his preaching.
 It was Chaos and Night at the first, and the
 blackness of darkness, and Hell's broad
 border,
 Earth was not, nor air, neither heaven ; when
 in depths of the womb of the dark without
 order
 First thing first-born of the black-plumed

Night was a wind-egg hatched in her
 bosom,
 Whence timely with seasons revolving again
 sweet Love burst out as a blossom,
 Gold wings glittering forth of his back, like
 whirlwinds gustily turning.
 He, after his wedlock with Chaos, whose wings
 are of darkness, in Hell broad-burning,
 For his nestlings begat him the race of us first,
 and upraised us to light new-lighted.
 And before this was not the race of the gods,
 until all things by Love were united :
 And of kind united with kind in communion
 of nature the sky and the sea are
 Brought forth, and the earth, and the race of
 the gods everlasting and blest. So that
 we are
 Far away the most ancient of all things blest.
 And that we are of Love's generation
 There are manifest manifold signs. We have
 wings, and with us have the Love's habi-
 tation ;
 And manifold fair young folk that forswore
 love once, ere the bloom of them ended,

Have the men that pursued and desired them
subdued, by the help of us only befriended,
With such baits as a quail, a flamingo, a goose,
or a cock's comb staring and splendid.

All best good things that befall men come from
us birds, as is plain to all reason :

For first we proclaim and make known to
them spring, and the winter and autumn
in season ;

Bid sow, when the crane starts clanging for
Afric, in shrill-voiced emigrant number,

And calls to the pilot to hang up his rudder
again for the season, and slumber ;

And then weave a cloak for Orestes the thief,
lest he strip men of theirs if it freezes.

And again thereafter the kite reappearing
announces a change in the breezes,

And that here is the season for shearing your
sheep of their spring wool. Then does
the swallow

Give you notice to sell your greatcoat, and
provide something light for the heat that's
to follow.

Thus are we as Ammon or Delphi unto you,
Dodona, nay, Phœbus Apollo.

For, as first ye come all to get auguries of birds,
even such is in all things your carriage,

Be the matter a matter of trade, or of earning
your bread, or of any one's marriage.

And all things ye lay to the charge of a bird that
belong to discerning prediction :

Winged fame is a bird, as you reckon : you
sneeze, and the sign's as a bird for con-
viction :

All tokens are "birds" with you—sounds
too, and lackeys, and donkeys. Then
must it not follow

That we ARE to you all as the manifest god-
head that speaks in prophetic Apollo ?

ATHENS :

AN ODE.

ERE from under earth again like fire the violet
kindle, [Str. 1.

Ere the holy buds and hoar on olive-
branches bloom,

Ere the crescent of the last pale month of win-
ter dwindle,

Shrink, and fall as falls a dead leaf on the
dead month's tomb,

Round the hills whose heights the first-born
olive-blossom brightened,

Round the city brow-bound once with
violets like a bride,

Up from under earth again a light that long
since lightened

Breaks, whence all the world took comfort
as all time takes pride.

Pride have all men in their fathers that were
free before them,

In the warriors that begat us free-born pride
have we :

But the fathers of their spirits, how may men
adore them,

With what rapture may we praise, who
bade our souls be free ?

Sons of Athens born in spirit and truth are
all born free men ;

Most of all, we, nurtured where the north
wind holds his reign :

Children all we sea-folk of the Salaminian
seamen,

Sons of them that beat back Persia they
that beat back Spain.

Since the songs of Greece fell silent, none like
ours have risen ;

Since the sails of Greece fell slack, no ships
have sailed like ours ;

How should we lament not, if her spirit sit
in prison ?

How should we rejoice not, if her wreaths
renew their flowers ?

All the world is sweeter, if the Athenian violet
quicken :

All the world is brighter, if the Athenian
sun return :

All things foul on earth wax fainter, by that
sun's light stricken :

All ill growths are withered, where those
fragrant flower-lights burn.

All the wandering waves of seas with all their
warring waters

Roll the record on forever of the sea-fight
there,

When the capes were battle's lists, and all the
straits were slaughter's,

And the myriad Medes as foam-flakes on the
scattering air.

Ours the lightning was that cleared the north
and lit the nations,

But the light that gave the whole world light
of old was she :

Ours an age or twain, but hers are endless
generations :

All the world is hers at heart, and most of
all are we.

Ye that bear the name about you of her
glory, [Ant. 1.

Men that wear the sign of Greeks upon you
sealed,

Yours is yet the choice to write yourselves in
story

Sons of them that fought the Marathonian
field.

Slaves of no man were ye, said your warrior
poet,

Neither subject unto man as underlings :

Yours is now the season here wherein to show
it,

If the seed ye be of them that knew not
kings.

If ye be not, swords nor words alike found
brittle

From the dust of death to raise you shall
prevail :

Subject swords and dead men's words may
stead you little,

If their old king-hating heart within you fail.
If your spirit of old, and not your bonds, be

broken,

If the kingless heart be molten in your
breasts,

By what signs and wonders, by what word or
token,

Shall ye drive the vultures from your eagles'
nests ?

All the gains of tyrants Freedom counts for
losses ;

Nought of all the work done holds she worth
the work,

When the slaves whose faith is set on crowns
and crosses

Drive the Cossack bear against the tiger Turk.
 Neither cross nor crown nor crescent shall ye bow to,
 Nought of Araby nor Jewry, priest nor king:
 As your watchword was of old, so be it now too:
 As from lips long stilled, from yours let healing spring.
 Through the fights of old, your battle-cry was healing,
 And the Saviour that ye called on was the Sun:
 Dawn by dawn behold in heaven your God, revealing
 Light from darkness as when Marathon was won.
 Gods were yours yet strange to Turk or Galilean,
 Light and Wisdom only then as gods adored:
 Pallas was your shield, your comforter was Pæan,
 From your bright world's navel spake the Sun your Lord.

Though the names be lost, and changed the signs of Light and Wisdom be, [Ep. 1.
 By these only shall men conquer, by these only be set free:
 When the whole world's eye was Athens, these were yours, and theirs were ye.
 Light was given you of your wisdom, light ye gave the world again:
 As the sun whose godhead lightened on her soul was Hellas then:
 Yea, the least of all her children as the chosen of other men.
 Change your hearts not with your garments, nor your faith with creeds that change:
 Truth was yours, the truth which time and chance transform not nor estrange:
 Purer truth nor higher abides not in the reach of time's whole range.
 Gods are they in all men's memories and for all time's periods,
 They that hurled the host back seaward which had scourged the sea with rods:
 Gods for us are all your fathers, even the least of these as gods.
 In the dark of days the thought of them is with us, strong to save,
 They that had no lord, and made the Great King lesser than a slave;
 They that rolled all Asia back on Asia, broken like a wave.
 No man's men were they, no master's and no God's but these their own:

Gods not loved in vain nor served amiss, nor all yet overthrown:
 Love of country, Freedom, Wisdom, Light, and none save these alone.
 King by king came up against them, sire and son, and turned to flee:
 Host on host roared westward, mightier each than each, if more might be:
 Field to field made answer, clamorous like as wave to wave at sea.
 Strife to strife responded, loud as rocks to clangorous rocks respond
 Where the deep rings wreck to seamen held in tempest's thrall and bond,
 Till when war's bright work was perfect peace as radiant rose beyond:
 Peace made bright with fruit of battle, stronger made for storm gone down,
 With the flower of song held heavenward for the violet of her crown
 Woven about the fragrant forehead of the foster-maiden's town.
 Gods arose alive on earth from under stroke of human hands:
 As the hands that wrought them, these are dead, and mixed with time's dead sands:
 But the godhead of supernal song, though these now stand not, stands.
 Pallas is not, Phœbus breathes no more in breathing brass or gold:
 Clytæmnestra towers, Cassandra wails, forever: Time is bold,
 But nor heart nor hand hath he to unwrite the scriptures writ of old.
 Dead the great chryselephantine God, as dew last evening shed:
 Dust of earth or foam of ocean is the symbol of his head:
 Earth and ocean shall be shadows when Prometheus shall be dead.

Fame around her warriors living rang through Greece and lightened, [Str. 2.
 Moving equal with their stature, stately with their strength:
 Thebes and Lacedæmon at their breathing presence brightened,
 Sense or sound of them filled all the live land's breadth and length.
 All the lesser tribes put on the pure Athenian fashion,
 One Hellenic heart was from the mountains to the sea:
 Sparta's bitter self grew sweet with high half-human passion,
 And her dry thorns flushed aflower in strait Thermopylæ.

Fruitless yet the flowers had fallen, and all
 the deeds died fruitless,
 Save that tongues of after men, the children
 of her peace,
 Took the tale up of her glories, transient else
 and rootless,
 And in ears and hearts of all men left the
 praise of Greece.
 Fair the war-time was when still, as beacon
 answering beacon,
 Sea to land flashed fight, and thundered
 note of wrath or cheer;
 But the strength of noonday night hath power
 to waste and weaken,
 Nor may light be passed from hand to
 hand of year to year
 If the dying deed be saved not, ere it die for
 ever,
 By the hands and lips of men more wise
 than years are strong;
 If the soul of man take heed not that the
 deed die never,
 Clothed about with purple and gold of
 story, crowned with song.
 Still the burning heart of boy and man alike
 rejoices,
 Hearing words which made it seem of old
 for all who sang
 That their heaven of heavens waxed happier
 when from free men's voices
Well-beloved Harmodius and Aristogeston
 rang.
 Never fell such fragrance from the flower-
 month's rose-red kirtle
 As from chaplets on the bright friends'
 brows who slew their lord;
 Greener grew the leaf and balmier blew the
 flower of myrtle
 When its blossom sheathed the sheer tyrannical
 sword.
 None so glorious garland crowned the feast
 Panathenæan
 As this wreath too frail to fetter fast the
 Cyprian dove :
 None so fiery song sprang sunwards annual
 as the pæan
 Praising perfect love of friends and perfect
 country's love.
 Higher than highest of all those heavens
 wherefrom the starry [Ant. 2.
 Song of Homer shone above the rolling
 fight,
 Gleams like spring's green bloom on boughs
 all gaunt and gnarled
 Soft live splendor as of flowers of foam in
 flight,

Glows a glory of mild-winged maidens upward
 mounting
 Sheer through air made shrill with strokes
 of smooth swift wings
 Round the rocks beyond foot's reach, past
 eyesight's counting,
 Up the cleft where iron wind of winter
 rings
 Round a God fast clenched in iron jaws of
 fetters,
 Him who culled for man the fruitful flower
 of fire,
 Bared the darkling scriptures writ in dazzling
 letters,
 Taught the truth of dreams deceiving
 men's desire,
 Gave their water-wandering chariot-seats of
 ocean
 Wings, and bade the rage of war-steeds
 champ the rein,
 Showed the symbols of the wild birds' wheel-
 ing motion,
 Waged for man's sake war with God and all
 his train.
 Earth, whose name was also Righteousness, a
 mother
 Many-named and single-natured, gave
 him breath
 Whence God's wrath could wring but this
 word and none other—
He may smite me, yet he shall not do to death.
 Him the tongue that sang triumphant while
 tormented
 Sang as loud the sevenfold storm that
 roared erewhile
 Round the towers of Thebes till wrath might
 rest contented :
 Sang the flight from smooth soft-sanded
 banks of Nile,
 When like mateless doves that fly from snare
 or tether
 Came the suppliants landwards trembling
 as they trod,
 And the prayer took wing from all their
 tongues together—
King of kings, most holy of holies, blessed
God.
 But what mouth may chant again, what heart
 may know it,
 All the rapture that all hearts of men put on
 When of Salamis the time-transcending poet
 Sang, whose hand had chased the Mede at
 Marathon?
 Darker dawned the song with stormier wings
 above the watch-fire spread [Ep. 2.
 Whence from Ida toward the hill of Hermes
 leapt the light that said

Troy was fallen, a torch funeral for the king's
triumphal head.
Dire indeed the birth of Leda's womb that
had God's self to sire
Bloomed, a flower of love that stung the soul
with fangs that gnaw like fire :
But the twin-born human-fathered sister-
flower bore fruit more dire.
Scarce the cry that called on airy heaven and
all swift winds on wing,
Wells of river-heads, and countless laugh of
waves past reckoning,
Earth which brought forth all, and the orbèd
sun that looks on everything,
Scarce that cry fills yet men's hearts more
full of heart-devouring dread
Than the murderous word said mocking, how
the child whose blood he shed
Might clasp fast and kiss her father where the
dead salute the dead.
But the latter note of anguish from the lips
that mocked her lord,
When her son's hand bared against the breast
that suckled him his sword,
How might man endure, O Æschylus, to hear
it and record ?
How might man endure, being mortal yet, O
thou most highest, to hear ?
How record, being born of woman ? Surely
not thy Furies near,
Surely this beheld, this only, blasted hearts
to death with fear.
Not the hissing hair, nor flakes of blood that
oozed from eyes of fire,
Nor the snort of savage sleep that snuffed the
hungering heart's desire
Where the hunted prey found hardly space
and harbor to respire ;
She whose likeness called them—' Sleep ye,
ho ? what need of you that sleep ?'
(Ah, what need indeed, where she was, of all
shapes that night may keep
Hidden dark as death and deeper than men's
dreams of hell are deep ?)
She the murderess of her husband, she the
huntsress of her son,
More than ye was she, the shadow that no
God withstands but one,
Wisdom equal-eyed and stronger and more
splendid than the sun.
Yea, no God may stand betwixt us and the
shadows of our deeds,
Nor the light of dreams that lighten darkness,
nor the prayer that pleads,
But the wisdom equal-souled with heaven,
the light alone that leads.
Light whose law bids home those childless
children of eternal night,

Soothed and reconciled and mastered and
transmuted in men's sight
Who behold their own souls, clothed with
darkness once, now clothed with light.
King of kings and father crowned of all our
fathers crowned of yore,
Lord of all the lords of song, whose head all
heads bow down before,
Glory be to thee from all thy sons in all
tongues evermore.

Rose and vine and olive and deep ivy-bloom
entwining [Str. 3.
Close the goodliest grave that e'er they
closest might entwine
Keep the wind from wasting and the sun
from too strong shining
Where the sound and light of sweetest
songs still float and shine.
Here the music seems to illumine the shade,
the light to whisper
Song, the flowers to put not odors only
forth, but words
Sweeter far than fragrance : here the wander-
ing wreaths twine crisp
Far, and louder far exults the note of all
wild birds.
Thoughts that change us, joys that crown
and sorrows that enthrone us,
Passions that enrobe us with a clearer air
than ours,
Move and breathe as living things beheld
round white Colonus,
Audibler than melodies and visibler than
flowers.
Love, in fight unconquered, Love, with spoils
of great men laden,
Never sang so sweet from throat of woman
or of dove :
Love, whose bed by night is in the soft cheeks
of a maiden,
And his march is over seas, and low roofs
lack not Love ;
Nor may one of all that live, ephemeral or
eternal,
Fly nor hide from Love ; but whoso clasps
him fast goes mad.
Never since the first-born year with flowers
first-born grew vernal
Such a song made listening hearts of lovers
glad or sad.
Never sounded note so radiant at the rayless
portal
Opening wide on the all-concealing lowland
of the dead
As the music mingling, when her doomsday
marked her mortal,

From her own and old men's voices round
 the bride's way shed,
 Round the grave her bride-house, hewn for
 endless habitation,
 Where, shut out from sunshine, with no
 bridegroom by, she slept ;
 But beloved of all her dark and fateful
 generation,
 But with all time's tears and praise be-
 sprinkled and bewept :
 Well-beloved of outcast father and self-
 slaughtered mother,
 Born, yet unpolluted, of their blind incestu-
 ous bed ;
 Best-beloved of him for whose dead sake she
 died, her brother,
 Hallowing by her own life's gift her own
 born brother's head :

Not with wine or oil nor any less libation
 [Ant. 3.]

Hallowed, nor made sweet with humbler
 perfume's breath ;
 Not with only these redeemed from desecra-
 tion,
 But with blood and spirit of life poured
 forth to death ;
 Blood unspotted, spirit unsullied, life devoted,
 Sister too supreme to make the bride's
 hope good,
 Daughter too divine as woman to be noted,
 Spouse of only death in mateless maiden-
 hood.
 Yea, in her was all the prayer fulfilled, the
 saying
 All accomplished—*Would that fate would
 let me wear*
Hallowed innocence of words and all deeds,
weighing
Well the laws thereof, begot on holier air,
Far on high sublimely established, whereof only
Heaven is father : nor did birth of mortal
mould
Bring them forth, nor shall oblivion lull to
lonely
Slumber. Great in these is God, and grows
not old.

Therefore even that inner darkness where she
 perished
 Surely seems as holy and lovely, seen aright,
 As desirable and as dearly to be cherished,
 As the haunt closed in with laurels from
 the light,
 Deep inwound with olive and wild vine in-
 woven,
 Where a godhead known and unknown
 makes men pale,
 But the darkness of the twilight noon is cloven

Still with shrill sweet moan of many a
 nightingale.

Closer clustering there they make sweet noise
 together,

Where the fearful gods look gentler than
 our fear,

And the grove thronged through with birds of
 holiest feather

Grows nor pale nor dumb with sense of
 dark things near.

There her father, called upon with signs of
 wonder,

Passed with tenderest words away by ways
 unknown,

Nor by sea-storm stricken down, nor touched
 of thunder,

To the dark benign deep underworld, alone.

Third of three that ruled in Athens, kings
 with sceptral song for staff, [Æp. 3.]

Gladdest heart that God gave ever milk and
 wine of thought to quaff,

Clearest eye that lightened ever to the broad
 lip's lordliest laugh,

Praise be thine as theirs whose tragic brows
 the loftier leaf engirds

For the live and lyric lightning of thy honey-
 hearted words,

Soft like sunny dewy wings of clouds and
 bright as crying of birds ;

Full of all sweet rays and notes that make of
 earth and air and sea

One great light and sound of laughter from
 one great God's heart, to be

Sign and semblance of the gladness of man's
 life where men breathe free.

With no Loxian sound obscure God uttered
 once, and all time heard,

All the soul of Athens, all the soul of England,
 in that word :

Rome arose the second child of freedom :
 northward rose the third.

Ere her Boreal dawn came kindling seas afoam
 and fields of snow,

Yet again, while Europe groaned and grovel-
 led, shone like suns aglow

Doria splendid over Genoa, Venice bright
 with Dandolo.

Dead was Hellas, but Ausonia by the light
 of dead men's deeds

Rose and walked awhile alive, though mocked
 as whom the fen-fire leads

By the creed-wrought faith of faithless souls
 that mock their doubts with creeds.

Dead are these, and man is risen again : and
 haply now the Three

Yet coequal and triune may stand in story,
 marked as free

<p>By the token of the washing of the waters of the sea. Athens first of all earth's kindred many-tongued and many-kinned Had the sea to friend and comfort, and for kinsman had the wind: She that bare Columbus next: then she that made her spoil of Ind. She that hears not what man's rage but only what the sea-wind saith: She that turned Spain's ships to cloud-wrack at the blasting of her breath, By her strengths of strong-souled children and of strong winds done to death. North and south the Great King's galleons went in Persian wise: and here</p>	<p>She, with Æschylean music on her lips that laughed back fear, In the face of Time's grey godhead shook the splendor of her spear. Fair as Athens then with foot upon her foe-man's front, and strong Even as Athens for redemption of the world from sovereign wrong, Like as Athens crowned she stood before the sun with crowning song. All the world is theirs with whom is freedom: first of all the free, Blest are they whom song has crowned and clothed with blessing: these as we, These alone have part in spirit with the sun that crowns the sea.</p>
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THE STATUE OF VICTOR HUGO.

<p style="text-align: center;">1.</p> <p>SINCE in Athens God stood plain for adoration, Since the sun beheld his likeness reared in stone, Since the bronze or gold of human consecration Gave to Greece her guardian's form and feature shown, Never hand of sculptor, never heart of nation, Found so glorious aim in all these ages flown As is theirs who rear for all time's acclamation Here the likeness of our mightiest and their own.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2.</p> <p>Theirs and ours and all men's living who behold him Crowned with garlands multiform and manifold; Praise and thanksgiving of all mankind enfold him Who for all men casts abroad his gifts of gold. With the gods of song have all men's tongues enrolled him, With the helpful gods have all men's hearts enrolled: Ours he is who love him, ours whose hearts' hearts hold him Fast as his the trust that hearts like his may hold.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3.</p> <p>He, the heart most high, the spirit on earth most blameless, Takes in charge all spirits, holds all hearts in trust: As the sea-wind's on the sea his ways are tameless, As the laws that steer the world his works are just. All most noble feel him nobler, all most shameless Feel his wrath and scorn make pale their pride and lust: All most poor and lowliest, all whose wrongs were nameless, Feel his word of comfort raise them from the dust.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4.</p> <p>Pride of place and lust of empire bloody-fruited Knew the blasting of his breath on leaf and fruit: Now the hand that smote the death-tree now disrooted Plants the refuge-tree that has man's hope for root. Ah, but we by whom his darkness was saluted, How shall now all we that see his day salute? How should love not seem by love's own speech confuted, Song before the sovereign singer not be</p>
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5.
With what worship, by what blessing, in
what measure,

May we sing of him, salute him, or adore,
With what hymn for praise, what thanksgiv-
ing for pleasure,

Who had given us more than heaven, and
gives us more?

Heaven's whole treasury, filled up full with
night's whole treasure,

Holds not so divine or deep a starry store
As the soul supreme that deals forth worlds
at leisure

Clothed with light and darkness, dense
with flower and ore.

6.
Song had touched the bourn: fresh verses
overflow it,

Loud and radiant, waves on waves on waves
that throng ;

Still the tide grows, and the sea-mark still
below it

Sinks and shifts and rises, changed and
swept along.

Rose it like a rock? the waters overthrow it,
And another stands beyond them sheer and
strong :

Goal by goal pays down its prize, and yields
its poet

Tribute claimed of triumph, palm achieved
of song

7.
Since his hand that holds the keys of fear
and wonder

Opened on the high priest's dreaming eyes
a door

Whence the lights of heaven and hell above
and under

Shone, and smote the face that men bow
down before,

Thrice again one singer's note had cloven in
sunder

Night, who blows again not one blast now
but four,

And the fourfold heaven is kindled with his
thunder,

And the stars about his forehead are four-
score.

8.
From the deep soul's depths where always love
abounded

First had risen a song with healing on its
wings

Whence the dews of mercy raining balms un-
bounded

Shed their last compassion even on sceptre
things.¹

Even on heads that like a curse the crown
surrounded

Fell his crowning pity, soft as cleansing
springs ;

And the sweet last note his wrath relenting
sounded

Bade men's heart's be melted not for slaves
but kings.

9.
Next, that faith might strengthen fear and
love embolden,

On the creeds of priests a scourge of sun-
beams fell :

And its flash made bare the deeps of heaven,
beholden

Not of men that cry, Lord, Lord, from
church or cell.²

Hope as young as dawn from night obscure
and olden

Rose again, such power abides in truth's
one spell:

Night, if dawn it be that touches her, grows
golden;

Tears, if such as angels weep, extinguish
hell.

10.
Through the blind loud mills of barren blear-
eyed learning

Where in dust and darkness children's
foreheads bow,

While men's labor, vain as wind or water
turning

Wheels and sails of dreams, makes life a
leafless bough,

Fell the light of scorn and pity touched with
yearning,

Next, from words that shone as heaven's
own kindling brow.³

Stars were these as watch-fires on the world's
waste burning,

Stars that fade not in the fourfold sunrise
now.⁴

11.
Now the voice that faints not till all wrongs
be wroken

Sounds as might the sun's song from the
morning's breast,

¹ *La Pitie Suprême*. 1879.

² *Religious et Religion*. 1880.

³ *L'Ane*. 1880.

⁴ *Les Quatre Vents de l'Esprit*. I. *Le Livre satirique*. II. *Le Livre dramatique*. III. *Le Livre lyrique*. IV. *Le Livre épique*. 1881.

All the seals of silence sealed of night are broken,

All the winds that bear the fourfold word are blest.

All the keen fierce east flames forth one fiery token;

All the north is loud with life that knows not rest,

All the south with song as though the stars had spoken;

All the judgment-fire of sunset scathes the west.

12.

Sound of pæan, roll of chanted panegyric,

Though by Pindar's mouth song's trumpet spake forth praise,

March of warrior songs in Pythian mood or Pyrrhic,

Though the blast were blown by lips of ancient days,

Ring not clearer than the clarion of satiric

Song whose breath sweeps bare the plague-infected ways

Till the world be pure as heaven is for the lyric

Sun to rise up clothed with radiant sounds as rays.

13.

Clear across the cloud-rack fluctuant and erratic

As the strong star smiles that lets no mourner mourn,

Hymned alike from lips of Lesbian choirs or Attic

Once at evensong and morning newly born,

Clear and sure above the changes of dramatic Tide and current, soft with love and keen with scorn,

Smiles the strong sweet soul of maidenhood, ecstatic

And inviolate as the red glad mouth of morn.

14.

Pure and passionate as dawn, whose apparition

Thrills with fire from heaven the wheels of hours that whirl,

Rose and passed her radiance in serene transition

From his eyes who sought a grain and found a pearl.

But the food by cunning hope for vain fruition

Lightly stolen away from keeping of a churl

Left the bitterness of death and hope's perdition

On the lip that scorn was wont for shame to curl.¹

15.

Over waves that darken round the wave-worn rover

Rang his clarion higher than winds cried round the ship,

Rose a pageant of set suns and storms blown over,

Hands that held life's guerdons fast or let them slip.

But no tongue may tell, no thanksgiving discover,

Half the heaven of blessing, soft with clouds that drip,

Keen with beams that kindle, dear as love to lover,

Opening by the spell's strength on his lyric lip.

16.

By that spell the soul transfigured and dilated

Puts forth wings that widen, breathes a brightening air,

Feeds on light and drinks of music, whence elated

All her sense grows godlike, seeing all depths made bare.

All the mists wherein before she sat belated

Shrink, till now the sunlight knows not if they were;

All this earth transformed is Eden recreated,

With the breath of heaven remurmuring in her hair.

17.

Sweeter far than aught of sweet that April nurses

Deep in dew-dropt woodland folded fast and furled

Breathes the fragrant song whose burning dawn disperses

Darkness, like the surge of armies backward hurled,

Even as though the touch of spring's own hand, that pierces

Earth with life's delight, had hidden in the imperaled

Golden bells and buds and petals of his verses

All the breath of all the flowers in all the world.

18.

But the soul therein, the light that our souls follow,

Fires and fills the song with more of prophet's pride,

¹ *Les Deux Trouvailles de Gallus. I. Margarita, comédie. II. Esca, drame.*

More of life than all the gulfs of death may swallow,

More of flame than all the might of night may hide.

Though the whole dark age were loud and void and hollow,

Strength of trust were here, and help for all souls tried,

And a token from the flight of that strange swallow¹

Whose migration still is toward the wintry side.

19.

Never came such token for divine solution
From the oraculous live darkness whence of yore

Ancient faith sought word of help and retribution,

Truth to lighten doubt, a sign to go before.

Never so baptismal waters of ablution

Bathed the brows of exile on so stern a shore,

Where the lightnings of the sea of revolution
Flashed across them ere its thunders yet might roar.

20.

By the lightning's light of present revelation
Shown, with epic thunder as from skies that frown,

Clothed in darkness as of darkling expiation,
Rose a vision of dead stars and suns gone down,

Whence of old fierce fire devoured the star-struck nation,

Till its wrath and woe lit red the raging town,

Now made glorious with his statue's crowning station,

Where may never gleam again a viler crown.

21.

King, with time for throne and all the years for pages,

He shall reign though all thrones else be overhurled,

Served of souls that have his living words for wages,

Crowned of heaven each dawn that leaves his brows imperled;

Girt about with robes unrent of storm that rages,

Robes not wrought with hands, from no loom's web unfurled;

Je suis une hirondelle étrange, car j'émigre
Du côté de l'hiver.

Le Lièvre Lyrique, lui

All the praise of all earth's tongues in all earth's ages,

All the love of all men's hearts in all the world.

22.

Yet what hand shall carve the soul or cast the spirit,

Mould the face of fame, bid glory's feature glow?

Who bequeath for eyes of ages hence to inherit

Him, the Master, whom love knows not if it know?

Scarcely perfect praise of men man's work might merit,

Scarcely bid such aim to perfect stature grow,

Were his hand the hand of Phidias who shall rear it,

And his soul the very soul of Angelo.

23.

Michael, awful angel of the world's last session,

Once on earth, like him, with fire of suffering tried,

Thine it were, if man's it were, without transgression,

Thine alone, to take this toil upon thy pride.

Thine, whose heart was great against the world's oppression,

Even as his whose word is lamp and staff and guide:

Advocate for man, untired of intercession,

Pleads his voice for slaves whose lords his voice defied.

24.

Earth, with all the kings and thralls on earth, below it,

Heaven alone, with all the worlds in heaven, above,

Let his likeness rise for suns and stars to know it, [love:]

High for men to worship, plain for men to brow that braved the tides which fain would overflow it,

Lip that gave the challenge, hand that flung the glove;

Comforter and prophet, Paraclete and poet,

Soul whose emblems are an eagle and a dove.

25.

Sun, that hast not seen a loftier head wax hoary,

Earth, which hast not shown the sun a nobler birth,

Time, that hast not on thy scroll defiled and
gory

One man's name writ brighter in its whole
wide girth,

Witness, till the final years fulfil their story,
Till the stars break off the music of their
mirth,

What among the sons of men was this man's [glory,
What the vesture of his soul revealed on
earth.

SONNETS.

HOPE AND FEAR.

BENEATH the shadow of dawn's aerial cope,
With eyes enkindled as the sun's own
sphere,

Hope from the front of youth in godlike
cheer

Looks Godward, past the shades where blind
men grope

Round the dark door that prayers nor dreams
can ope,

And makes for joy the very darkness dear
That gives her wide wings play; nor dreams
that fear

At noon may rise and pierce the heart of
hope.

Then, when the soul leaves off to dream and
yearn,

May truth first purge her eyesight to discern
What once being known leaves time no
power to appal;

Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not, learn
The kind wise word that falls from years
that fall—

'Hope thou not much, and fear thou not
at all.'

AFTER SUNSET.

'Si quis piorum Manibus locus.'

I.

STRAIGHT from the sun's grave in the deep
clear west

A sweet strong wind blows, glad of life:
and I,

Under the soft keen stardawn whence the
sky

Takes life renewed, and all night's godlike
breast

Palpitates, gradually revealed at rest

By growth and change of ardors felt on
high,

Make onward, till the last flame fall and die
And all the world by night's broad hand lie
blest.

Haply, meseems, as from that edge of death,
Whereon the day lies dark, a brightening
breath

Blows more of benediction than the morn,
So from the graves whereon grief gazing
saith

That half our heart of life there lies forlorn
May light or breath at least of hope be
born.

II.

The wind was soft before the sunset fled:

Now, while the cloud-enshrouded corpse of
day

Is loweiled along a red funereal way

Down to the dark that knows not white from
red,

A clear sheer breeze against the night makes
head,

Serene, but sure of life as ere a ray

Springs, or the dusk of dawn knows red
from gray,

Being as a soul that knows not quick from
dead.

From far beyond the sunset, far above,

Full toward the starry soundless east it
blows

Bright as a child's breath breathing on a
rose,

Smooth to the sense as plume of any dove;

Till more and more as darkness grows and
glows

Silence and night seem likest life and love.

III.

If light of life outlive the set of sun

That men call death and end of all things,
then

How should not that which life held best
for men

And proved most precious, though it seem
undone

By force of death and woful victory won,

Be first and surest of revival, when

Death shall bow down to life arisen again?

So shall the soul seen be the self-same one

That looked and spake with even such lips
and eyes

As love shall doubt not then to recognize,

And all bright thoughts and smiles of all
time past

Revive, transfigured, but in spirit and sense

None other than we knew, for evidence

That love's last mortal word was not his
last.

A STUDY FROM MEMORY.

IF that be yet a living soul which here
 Seemed brighter for the growth of num-
 bered springs
 And clothed by Time and Pain with good-
 lier things
 Each year it saw fulfilled a fresh fleet year,
 Death can have changed not aught that made
 it dear;
 Half humorous goodness, grave-eyed mirth
 on wings
 Bright-balanced, blither-voiced than quining
 strings;
 Most radiant patience, crowned with conquer-
 ing cheer;
 A spirit inviolable that smiled and sang
 By might of nature and heroic need
 More sweet and strong than loftiest dream
 or deed;
 A song that shone, a light whence music rang
 High as the sunniest heights of kindest
 thought;
 All these must be, or all she was be nought.

TO DR. JOHIN BROWN.

BEYOND the north wind lay the land of old
 Where men dwelt blithe and blameless,
 clothed and fed
 With joy's bright raiment and with love's
 sweet bread,
 The whitest flock of earth's maternal fold.
 None there might wear about his brows en-
 rolled
 A light of lovelier fame than rings your
 head,
 Whose lovesome love of children and the
 dead
 All men give thanks for: I far off behold
 A dear dead hand that links us, and a light
 The blithest and benignest of the night,
 The night of death's sweet sleep, wherein
 may be
 A star to show your spirit in present sight
 Some happier island in the Elysian sea
 Where Rab may lick the hand of Mar-
 jorie.

TO WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

THE larks are loud above our leagues of whin
 Now the sun's perfume fills their glorious
 gold

With odor like the color: all the wold
 Is only light and song and wind wherein
 These twain are blent in one with shining din.
 And now your gift, a giver's kingly-souled,
 Dear old fast friend whose honors grow not
 old,
 Bids memory's note as loud and sweet begin.
 Though all but we from life be now gone
 forth
 Of that bright household in our joyous north
 Where I, scarce clear of boyhood just at end,
 First met your hand; yet under life's clear
 dome,
 Now seventy strenuous years have crowned
 my friend,
 Shines no less bright his full-sheaved har-
 vest-home.

A DEATH ON EASTER DAY.

THE strong spring sun rejoicingly may rise,
 Rise and make revel, as of old men said,
 Like dancing hearts of lovers newly wed:
 A light more bright than ever bathed the
 skies
 Departs for all time out of all men's eyes.
 The crowns that girt last night a living
 head
 Shine only now, though deathless, on the
 dead:
 Art that mocks death, and Song that never
 dies.
 Albeit the bright sweet mothlike wings be
 furled,
 Hope sees, past all division and defection,
 And higher than swims the mist of human
 breath,
 The soul most radiant once in all the world
 Requickened to regenerate resurrection
 Out of the likeness of the shadow of
 death.

ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS CAR-
 LYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT.

Two souls diverse out of our human sight
 Pass, followed one with love and each with
 wonder:
 The stormy sophist with his mouth of
 thunder,
 Clothed with loud words and mantled in the
 night
 Of darkness and magnificence of night;

And one whose eye could smite the night in
sunder,
Searching if light or no light were there-
under,
And found in love of loving-kindness light.
Duty divine and Thought with eyes of fire
Still following Righteousness with deep desire
Shone sole and stern before her and above,
Sure stars and sole to steer by ; but more
sweet
Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly
feet,
The light of little children, and their love.

AFTER LOOKING INTO CARLYLE'S REMINISCENCES.

I.

THREE men lived yet when this dead man
was young
Whose names and words endure forever :
one
Whose eyes grew dim with straining toward
the sun,
And his wings weakened, and his angel's
tongue
Lost half the sweetest song was ever sung,
But like the strain half uttered earth hears
none,
Nor shall man hear till all men's songs are
done :
One whose clear spirit like an eagle hung
Between the mountains hallowed by his love
And the sky stainless as his soul above :
And one the sweetest heart that ever spake
The brightest words wherein sweet wisdom
smiled.
These deathless names by this dead snake
defiled
Bid memory spit upon him for their sake.

II.

Sweet heart, forgive me for thine own sweet
sake,
Whose kind blithe soul such seas of sorrow
swam,
And for my love's sake, powerless as I am
For love to praise thee, or like thee to make
Music of mirth where hearts less pure would
break,
Less pure than thine, our life-unspotted
Lamb.
Things hatefullest thou hadst not heart to
damn,
Nor wouldst have set thine heel on this dead
snake.

Let worms consume its memory with its
tongue,
The fang that stabbed fair Truth, the lip that
stung
Men's memories uncorroded with its breath.
Forgive me, that with bitter words like his
I mix the gentlest English name that is,
The tenderest held of all that know not
death.

A LAST LOOK.

SICK of self-love, Malvolio, like an owl
That hoots the sun risen where starlight
sank,
With German garters crossed athwart thy
frank
Stout Scottish legs, men watched thee snarl
and scowl,
And boys responsive with reverberate howl
Shrilled, hearing how to thee the springtime
stank
And as thine own soul all the world smelt
rank
And as thine own thoughts Liberty seemed
foul.
Now, for all ill thoughts nursed and ill words
given
Not all condemned, not utterly forgiven,
Son of the storm and darkness, pass in
peace.
Peace upon earth thou knewest not : now,
being dead,
Rest, with nor curse nor blessing on thine
head,
Where high-strung hate and strenuous envy
cease.

DICKENS.

CHIEF in thy generation born of men
Whom English praise acclaimed as Eng-
lish-born,
With eyes that matched the worldwide eyes
of morn
For gleam of tears or laughter, tenderest
then
When thoughts of children warmed their
light, or when
Reverence of age with love and labor worn,
Or godlike pity fired with godlike scorn,
Shot through them flame that winged thy
swift live pen:
Where stars and suns that we behold not
burn,

Higher even than here, though highest was
 here thy place,
 Love sees thy spirit laugh and speak and
 shine
 With Shakespeare and the soft bright soul of
 Sterne
 And Fielding's kindest might and Gold-
 smith's grace ;
 Scarce one more loved or worthier love
 than thine.

ON LAMB'S SPECIMENS OF DRAMA-
 TIC POETS.

I.

IF all the flowers of all the fields on earth
 By wonder-working summer were made
 one,
 Its fragrance were not sweeter in the sun,
 Its treasure-house of leaves were not more
 worth
 Than those wherefrom thy light of musing
 mirth
 Shone, till each leaf whereon thy pen would
 run
 Breathed life, and all its breath was beni-
 son.
 Beloved beyond all names of English birth,
 More dear than mightier memories; gentlest
 name
 That ever clothed itself with flower-sweet
 fame,
 Or linked itself with loftiest names of old
 By right and might of loving; I, that am
 Less than the least of those within thy fold,
 Give only thanks for them to thee, Charles
 Lamb.

II.

So many a year had borne its own bright bees
 And slain them since thy honey-bees were
 hived,
 John Day, in cells of flower-sweet verse
 contrived
 So well with craft of moulding melodies,
 Thy soul perchance in amaranth fields at ease
 Thought not to hear the sound on earth
 revived
 Of summer music from the spring derived
 When thy song sucked the flower of flower-
 ing trees.
 But thine was not the chance of every day:
 Time, after many a darkling hour, grew sunny,
 And light between the clouds ere sunset
 swam,

Laughing, and kissed their darkness all
 away,
 When, touched and tasted and approved,
 thy honey
 Took subtler sweetness from the lips of
 Lamb.

TO JOHN NICHOL.

I.

FRIEND of the dead, and friend of all my
 days
 Even since they cast off boyhood, I salute
 The song saluting friends whose songs are
 mute
 With full burnt-offerings of clear-spirited
 praise.
 That since our old young years our several
 ways
 Have led through fields diverse of flower
 and fruit
 Yet no cross wind has once relaxed the
 root
 We set long since beneath the sundawn's rays,
 The root of trust whence towered the trusty
 tree,
 Friendship—this only and duly might impel
 My song to salutation of your own;
 More even than praise of one unseen of me
 And loved—the starry spirit of Dobell,
 To mine by light and music only known.

II.

But more than this what moves me most of
 all
 To leave not all unworded and unsped
 The whole heart's greeting of my thanks
 unsaid
 Scarce needs this sign, that from my tongue
 should fall
 His name whom sorrow and reverent love
 recall,
 The sign to friends on earth of that dear
 head
 Alive, which now long since untimely dead
 The wan gray waters covered for a pall.
 Their trustless reaches dense with tangling
 stems
 Took never life more taintless of rebuke,
 More pure and perfect, more serene and
 kind,
 Than when those clear eyes closed beneath
 the Thames,
 And made the now more hallowed name of
 Luke
 Memorial to us of morning left behind.

DYSTHANATOS.

*Ad generem Cereris sine cæde et vulnere pauci
Descendant reges, aut succi morte tyranni.*

By no dry death another king goes down
The way of kings. Yet may no free man's
voice,
For stern compassion and deep awe, re-
joice
That one sign more is given against the
crown,
That one more head those dark red waters
drown
Which rise round thrones whose trembling
equipoise
Is propped on sand and bloodshed and such
toys
As human hearts that shrink at human frown.
The name writ red on Polish earth, the star
That was to outshine our England's in the
far
East heaven of empire—where is one that
saith
Proud words now, prophesying of this White
Czar?
'In bloodless pangs few kings yield up
their breath,
Few tyrants perish by no violent death.'

EUONYMOS.

*ἐν μὴν ἡ τμήν ἐδίδου νικηφόρος ἀλκή
ἐκ νίκης ὄνομα' ἔσχε φοβου κτάρ αἰὲν ἀθικτος.*

A YEAR ago red wrath and keen despair
Spake, and the sole word from their dark-
ness sent
Laid low the lord not all omnipotent
Who stood most like a god of all that were
As gods for pride of power, till fire and air
Made earth of all his godhead. Lightning
rent
The heart of empire's lurid firmament,
And laid the mortal core of manhood bare.
But when the calm crowned head that all
revere
For valor higher than that which casts out
fear,
Since fear came near it never, comes near
death,
Blind murder cowers before it, knowing that
here
No braver soul drew bright and queenly
breath
Since England wept upon Elizabeth.

ON THE RUSSIAN PERSECUTION OF
THE JEWS.

O SON of man, by lying tongues adored,
By slaughterous hands of slaves with feet
red-shod
In carnage deep as ever Christian trod
Profaned with prayer and sacrifice abhorred
And incense from the trembling tyrant's horde,
Brute worshippers or wielders of the rod,
Most murderous even of all that call thee
God,
Most treacherous even that ever called thee
Lord:
Face loved of little children long ago,
Head hated of the priests and rulers then,
If thou see this, or hear these hounds of
thine
Run ravening as the Gadarean swine,
Say, was not this thy Passion, to foreknow
In death's worst hour the works of Christian
men?

BISMARCK AT CANOSSA.

NOT all disgraced, in that Italian town,
The imperial German cowered beneath
thine hand,
Alone indeed imperial Hildebrand,
And felt thy foot and Rome's, and felt her
frown
And thine, more strong and sovereign than
his crown,
Though lion forged its blood-encrusted
band.
But now the princely wielder of his land,
For hatred's sake toward freedom, so bows
down,
No strength is in the foot to spurn: its tread
Can bruise not now the proud submitted
head:
But how much more abased, much lower
brought low,
And more intolerably humiliated,
The neck submissive of the prosperous foe,
Than his whom scorn saw shuddering in the
snow!

QUIA NOMINOR LEO.

I.

WHAT part is left thee, lion? Ravenous
beast,
Which hadst the world for pasture, and for
scope

And compass of thine homicidal hope
The kingdom of the spirit of man, the feast
Of souls subdued from west to sunless east,

From blackening north to bloodred south
aslope,

All servile ; earth for footcloth of the pope,
And heaven for chancel-ceiling of the priest ;
Thou that hadst earth by right of rack and rod,
Thou that hadst Rome because thy name was
God,

And by thy creed's gift heaven wherein to
dwell ;

Heaven laughs with all his light and might
above

That earth has cast thee out of faith and
love ;

Thy part is but the hollow dream of hell.

II.

The light of life has faded from thy cause,
High priest of heaven and hell and pur-
gatory :

Thy lips are loud with strains of oldworld
story,

But the red prey was rent out of thy paws
Long since : and they that dying brake down
thy laws

Have with the fires of death-enkindled glory
Put out the flame that faltered on thy hoary
High altars, waning with the world's applause.
This Italy was Dante's : Bruno died

Here : Campanella, too sublime for pride,
Endured thy God's worst here, and hence
went home.

And what art thou, that time's full tide should
shrink

For thy sake downward ? What art thou, to
think

Thy God shall give thee back for birthright
Rome ?

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

NOT for less love, all glorious France, to thee,
'Sweet enemy' called in days long since at
end,

Now found and hailed of England sweeter
friend,

Bright sister of our freedom now, being free ;
Not for less love or faith in friendship we

Whose love burnt ever toward thee re-
prehend

The vile vain greed whose pursy dreams
portend

Between our shores suppression of the sea.

Not by dull toil of blind mechanic art
Shall these be linked for no man's force to
part

Nor length of years and changes to divide,
But union only of trust and loving heart
And perfect faith in freedom strong to abide
And spirit at one with spirit on either side.

SIR WILLIAM GOMM.

I.

AT threescore years and five aroused anew
To rule in India, forth a soldier went
On whose bright-fronted youth fierce war
had spent

Its iron stress of storm, till glory grew
Full as the red sun waned on Waterloo.

Landing, he met the word from England
sent

Which bade him yield up rule: and he, con-
tent,

Resigned it, as a mightier warrior's due ;
And wrote as one rejoicing to record
That 'from the first' his royal heart was
lord

Of its own pride or pain ; that thought was
none

Therein save this, that in her perilous strait
England, whose womb brings forth her sons
so great,

Should choose to serve her first her migh-
tiest son.

II.

Glory beyond all flight of warlike fame
Go with the warrior's memory who pre-
ferred

To praise of men whereby men's hearts
are stirred,

And acclamation of his own proud name
With blare of trumpet-blasts and sound and
flame

Of pageant honor, and the titular word
That only wins men worship of the herd,

His country's sovereign good ; who overcame
Pride, wrath, and hope of all high chance on
earth,

For this land's love that gave his great heart
birth.

O nursing of the sea-winds and the sea,
Immortal England, goddess ocean-born,
What shall thy children fear, what strengths
not scorn,

While children of such mould are born to
thee ?

EUTHANATOS.

IN MEMORY OF MRS. THELLUSSON.

FORTH of our ways and woes,
 FORTH of the winds and snows,
 A white soul soaring goes,
 Winged like a dove:
 So sweet, so pure, so clear,
 So heavenly tempered here,
 Love need not hope or fear her changed
 above:

Ere dawned her day to die,
 So heavenly, that on high
 Change could not glorify
 Nor death refine her:
 Pure gold of perfect love,
 On earth like heaven's own dove,
 She cannot wear, above, a smile diviner.

Her voice in heaven's own quire
 Can sound no heavenlier lyre
 Than here: no purer fire
 Her soul can soar:
 No sweeter stars her eyes
 In unimagined skies
 Beyond our sight can rise than here before.

Hardly long years had shed
 Their shadows on her head:
 Hardly we think her dead,
 Who hardly thought her
 Old: hardly can believe
 The grief our hearts receive
 And wonder while they grieve, as wrong were
 wrought her.

But though strong grief be strong
 No word or thought of wrong
 May stain the trembling song,
 Wring the bruised heart,
 That sounds or sighs its faint
 Low note of love, nor taint
 Grief for so sweet a saint, when such depart.

A saint whose perfect soul,
 With perfect love for goal,
 Faith hardly might control,
 Creeds might not harden:
 A flower more splendid far
 Than the most radiant star
 Seen here of all that are in God's own garden.

Surely the stars we see
 Rise and relapse as we,
 And change and set, may be

But shadows too.
 But spirits that man's lot
 Could neither mar nor spot
 Like these false lights are not, being heavenly
 true.

Not like these dying lights
 Of worlds whose glory smites
 The passage of the nights
 Through heaven's blind prison:
 Not like their souls who see,
 If thought fly far and free,
 No heavenlier heaven to be for souls risen,

A soul wherein love shone
 Even like the sun, alone,
 With fervor of its own
 And splendor fed,
 Made by no creeds less kind
 Toward souls by none confined,
 Could Death's self quench or blind, Love's
 self were dead.

FIRST AND LAST.

UPON the borderlands of being,
 Where life draws hardly breath
 Between the lights and shadows fleeing
 Fast as a word one saith,
 Two flowers rejoice our eyesight, seeing
 The dawns of birth and death.

Behind the babe his dawn is lying
 Half risen with notes of mirth
 From all the winds about it flying
 Through new-born heaven and earth:
 Before bright age his day for dying
 Dawns equal-eyed with birth.

Equal the dews of even and dawn,
 Equal the sun's eye seen
 A hand's breadth risen and half withdrawn
 But no bright hour between
 Brings aught so bright by stream or lawn
 To noonday growths of green.

Which flower of life may smell the sweeter
 To love's insensual sense,
 Which fragrance move with offering meeter
 His soothed omnipotence,
 Being chosen as fairer or as fleeter,
 Borne hither or borne hence,

Love's foiled omniscience knows not: this
 Where more than all he knows

With all his lore of bale and bliss,
The choice of rose and rose,
One red as lips that touch with his,
One white as moonlit snows.

No hope is half so sweet and good,
No dream of saint or sage
So fair as these are: no dark mood
But these might best assuage;
The sweet red rose of babyhood,
The white sweet rose of age.

— LINES ON THE DEATH OF EDWARD JOHN TRELAWNY.

LAST high star of the years whose thunder
Still men's listening remembrance hears,
Last light left of our fathers' years,
Watched with honor and hailed with wonder
Thou too then have the years borne under,
Thou too then hast regained thy peers.

Wings that warred with the winds of morn-
ing,
Storm-winds rocking the red great dawn,
Close at last, and a film is drawn
Over the eyes of the storm-bird, scorning
Now no longer the loud wind's warning,
Waves that threaten or waves that fawn.

Peers were none of thee left us living,
Peers of theirs we shall see no more.
Eight years over the full fourscore
Knew thee: now shalt thou sleep, forgiving
All griefs past of the wild world's giving,
Moored at last on the stormless shore.

Worldwide liberty's lifelong lover,
Lover no less of the strength of song,
Sea-king, swordsman, hater of wrong,
Over thy dust that the dust shall cover
Comes my song as a bird to hover,
Borne of its will as of wings along

Cherished of thee were this brief song's
brothers
Now that follows them, cherishing thee.
Over the tides and the tideless sea
Soft as a smile of the earth our mother's
Flies it faster than all those others,
First of the troop at thy tomb to be.

Memories of Greece and the mountain's
hollow
Guarded alone of thy loyal sword

Hold thy name for our hearts in ward:
Yet more fair are our hearts to follow
One way now with the southward swallow
Back to the grave of the man their lord.

Heart of hearts, art thou moved not, hearing
Surely, if hearts of the dead may hear,
Whose true heart it is now draws near?
Surely the sense of it thrills thee, cheering
Darkness and death with the news now near-
ing—
Shelley, Trelawny rejoins thee here

— ADIEUX À MARIE STUART.

I.

QUEEN, for whose house my fathers fought,
With hopes that rose and fell,
Red star of boyhood's fiery thought,
Farewell.

They gave their lives, and I, my queen,
Have given you of my life,
Seeing your brave star burn high between
Men's strife.

The strife that lightened round their spears
Long since fell still: so long
Hardly may hope to last in years
My song.

But still through strife of time and thought
Your light on me too fell:
Queen, in whose name we sang or fought,
Farewell.

II.

There beats no heart on either border
Wherethrough the north blasts blow
But keeps your memory as a warder
His beacon-fire aglow.

Long since it fired with love and wonder
Mine, for whose April age
Blithe midsummer made banquet under
The shade of Hermitage.

Soft sang the burn's blithe notes, that gather
Strength to ring true:
And air and trees and sun and heather
Remembered you.

Old border ghosts of fight or fairy
Or love or teen,

These they forgot, remembering Mary
The Queen.

III.

Queen once of Scots and ever of ours
Whose sires brought forth for you
Their lives to strew your way like flowers,
Adieu.

Dead is full many a dead man's name
Who died for you this long
Time past: shall this too fare the same,
My song?

But surely, though it die or live,
Your face was worth
All that a man may think to give
On earth.

No darkness cast of years between
Can darken you:
Man's love will never bid my queen
Adieu.

IV.

Love hangs like light about your name
As music round the shell:
No heart can take of you a tame
Farewell.

Yet, when your very face was seen,
Ill gifts were yours for giving:
Love gat strange guerdons of my queen
When living.

O diamond heart unflawed and clear,
The whole world's crowning jewel!
Was ever heart so deadly dear
So cruel?

Yet none for you of all that bled
Grudged once one drop that fell:
Not one to life reluctant said
Farewell.

V.

Strange love they have given you, love dis-
loyal,
Who mock with praise your name,
To leave a head so rare and royal
Too low for praise or blame.

You could not love nor hate, they tell us
You had nor sense nor sting:
In God's name, then, what plague befell us
To fight for such a thing?

'Some faults the gods will give,' to fetter
Man's highest intent:

But surely you were something better
Than innocent!

No maid that strays with steps unwary
Through snares unseen,
But one to live and die for; Mary,
The Queen.

VI.

Forgive them all their praise, who blot
Your fame with praise of you:
Then love may say, and falter not,
Adieu.

Yet some you hardly would forgive
Who did you much less wrong
Once; but resentment should not live
Too long.

They never saw your lip's bright bow,
Your swordbright eyes,
The bluest of heavenly things below
The skies.

Clear eyes that love's self finds most like
A swordblade's blue,
A swordblade's ever keen to strike,
Adieu.

VII.

Though all things breathe or sound of fight
That yet make up your spell,
To bid you were to bid the light
Farewell.

Farewell the song says only, being
A star whose race is run:
Farewell the soul says never, seeing
The sun.

Yet, wellnigh as with flash of tears,
The song must say but so
That took your praise up twenty years
Ago.

More bright than stars or moons that vary,
Sun kindling heaven and hell,
Here, after all these years, Queen Mary,
Farewell.

HERSE.

WHEN grace is given us ever to behold
A child some sweet months old,
Love, laying across our lips his finger, saith,
Smiling, with bated breath,

Hush ! for the holiest thing that lives is here,
 And heaven's own heart how near !
 How dare we, that may gaze not on the sun,
 Gaze on this verier one ?
 Heart, hold thy peace; eyes, be cast down
 for shame;
 Lips, breathe not yet its name.
 In heaven they know what name to call it; we,
 How should we know? For, see!
 The adorable sweet living marvellous
 Strange light that lightens us
 Who gaze, desertless of such glorious grace,
 Full in a babe's warm face!
 All roses that the morning rears are nought.
 All stars not worth a thought,
 Set this one star against them, or suppose
 As rival this one rose.
 What price could pay with earth's whole
 weight of gold
 One least flushed roseleaf's fold
 Of all this dimpling store of smiles that shine
 From each warm curve and line,
 Each charm of flower-sweet flesh, to reillumine
 The dappled rose-red bloom
 Of all its dainty body, honey-sweet
 Clenched hands and curled-up feet,
 That on the roses of the dawn have trod
 As they came down from God,
 And keep the flush and color that the sky
 Takes when the sun comes nigh,
 And keep the likeness of the smile their grace
 Evoked on God's own face
 When, seeing this work of his most heavenly
 mood,
 He saw that it was good ?
 For all its warm sweet body seems one smile,
 And mere men's love too vile
 To meet it, or with eyes that worship dims
 Read o'er the little limbs,
 Read all the book of all their beauties o'er,
 Rejoice, revere, adore,
 Bow down and worship each delight in turn,
 Laugh, wonder, yield, and yearn.
 But when our trembling kisses dare, yet dread,
 Even to draw nigh its head,
 And touch, and scarce with touch or breath
 surprise
 Its mild miraculous eyes
 Out of their viewless vision—O, what then,
 What may be said of men ?
 What speech may name a new-born child ?
 what word
 Earth ever spake or heard ?
 The best men's tongue that ever glory knew
 Called that a drop of dew
 Which from the breathing creature's kindly
 womb

Came forth in blameless bloom.
 We have no word, as had those men most
 high,
 To call a baby by.
 Rose, ruby, lily, pearl of stormless seas—
 A better word than these,
 A better sign it was than flower or gem
 That love revealed to them:
 They knew that whence comes light of quick-
 ening flame,
 Thence only this thing came,
 And only might be likened of our love
 To somewhat born above,
 Not even to sweetest things dropped else on
 earth,
 Only to dew's own birth.
 Nor doubt we but their sense was heavenly
 true,
 Babe, when we gaze on you,
 A dew-drop out of heaven whose colors are
 More bright than sun or star,
 As now, ere watching love dare fear or hope,
 Lips, hands, and eyelids ope.
 And all your life is mixed with earthly heaven.
 O child, what news from heaven ?

 TWINS.

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED TO W. M. R.
 AND L. R.

APRIL, on whose wings
 Ride all gracious things,
 Like the star that brings
 All things good to man,
 Ere his light, that yet
 Makes the month shine, set,
 And fair May forget
 Whence her birth began,

 Brings, as heart would choose,
 Sound of golden news,
 Bright as kindling dews
 When the dawn begins;
 Tidings clear as mirth,
 Sweet as air and earth
 Now that hail the birth,
 Twice thus blest, of twins.

 In the lovely land
 Where with hand in hand
 Lovers wedded stand
 Other joys before
 Made your mixed life sweet :
 Now, as Time sees meet,

Three glad blossoms greet
Two glad blossoms more.

Fed with sun and dew,
While your joys were new,
First arose and grew
One bright olive-shoot :
Then a fair and fine
Slip of warm-haired pine
Felt the sweet sun shine
On its leaf and fruit.

And it wore for mark
Graven on the dark
Beauty of its bark
That the noblest name
Worn in song of old
By the king whose bold
Hand had fast in hold
All the flower of fame.

Then, with southern skies
Flattered in her eyes,
Which, in lovelier wise
Yet, reflect their blue
Brightened more, being bright
Here with life's delight,
And with love's live light
Glorified anew,

Came, as fair as came
One who bore her name
(She that broke as flame
From the swan-shell white),
Crowned with tender hair
Only, but more fair
Than all queens that were
Themes of oldworld fight,

Of your flowers the third
Bud, or new-fledged bird
In your hearts' nest heard
Murmuring like a dove
Bright as those that drew
Over waves where blew
No loud wind the blue
Heaven-hued car of love.

Not the glorious grace
Even of that one face
Potent to displace
All the towers of Troy
Surely shone more clear
Once with childlike cheer
Than this child's face here
Now with living joy.

After these again
Here in April's train
Breaks the bloom of twain
Blossoms in one birth
For a crown of May
On the front of day
When he takes his way
Over heaven and earth.

Half a heavenly thing
Given from heaven to Spring
By the sun her king,
Half a tender toy,
Seems a child of curl
Yet too soft to twirl ;
Seems the flower-sweet girl
By the flower-bright boy.

All the kind gods' grace,
All their love, embrace
Ever either face,
Ever brood above them :
All soft wings of hours
Screen them as with flowers
From all beams and showers :
All life's seasons love them.

When the dews of sleep
Falling lightliest keep
Eyes too close to peep
Forth and laugh off rest,
Joy from face to feet
Fill them, as is meet :
Life to them be sweet
As their mother's breast.

When those dews are dry,
And in day's bright eye
Looking full they lie
Bright as rose and pearl,
All returns of joy
Pure of time's alloy
Bless the rose-red boy,
Guard the rose-white girl.

POSTSCRIPT.

Friends, if I could take
Half a note from Blake
Or but one verse make
Of the Conqueror's mine,
Better than my best
Song above your nest
I would sing : the quest
Now seems too divine.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH.

If childhood were not in the world,
But only men and women grown ;
No baby-locks in tendrils curled,
No baby-blossoms blown ;

Though men were stronger, women fairer,
And nearer all delights in reach,
And verse and music uttered rarer
Tones of more godlike speech ;

Though the utmost life of life's best hours
Found, as it cannot now find, words ;
Though desert sands were sweet as flowers
And flowers could sing like birds,

But children never heard them, never
They felt a child's foot leap and run :
This were a drearier star than ever
Yet looked upon the sun.

SEVEN YEARS OLD.

I.

SEVEN white roses on one tree,
Seven white loaves of blameless leaven,
Seven white sails on one soft sea,
Seven white swans on one lake's lee,
Seven white flowerlike stars in heaven,
All are types unmeet to be
For a birthday's crown of seven.

II.

Not the radiance of the roses,
Not the blessing of the bread,
Not the breeze that ere day grows is
Fresh for sails and swans, and closes
Wings above the sun's grave spread,
When the starshine on the snows is
Sweet as sleep on sorrow shed.

III.

Nothing sweetest, nothing best,
Holds so good and sweet a treasure
As the love wherewith once blest
Joy grows holy, grief takes rest.
Life, half tired with hours to measure,
Fills his eyes and lips and breast
With most light and breath of pleasure ;

IV.

As the rapture unpolluted,
As the passion undefiled,
By whose force all pains heart-rooted

Are transfigured and transmuted,
Recompensed and reconciled,
Through the imperial, undisputed,
Present godhead of a child.

V.

Brown bright eyes and fair bright head,
Worth a worthier crown than this is,
Worth a worthier song instead,
Sweet grave wise round mouth, full fed
With the joy of love, whose bliss is
More than mortal wine and bread,
Lips whose words are sweet as kisses,

VI.

Little hands so glad of giving,
Little heart so glad of love,
Little soul so glad of living,
While the strong swift hours are weaving
Light with darkness woven above,
Time for mirth and time for grieving,
Plume of raven and plume of dove,

VII.

I can give you but a word
Warm with love therein for leaven,
But a song that falls unheard
Yet on ears of sense unstirred
Yet by song so far from heaven,
Whence you came the brightest bird,
Seven years since, of seven times seven.

EIGHT YEARS OLD.

I.

Sun, whom the faltering snow-cloud fears,
Rise, let the time of year be May,
Speak now the word that April hears,
Let March have all his royal way ;
Bid all spring raise in winter's ears
All tunes her children hear or play,
Because the crown of eight glad years
On one bright head is set to-day.

II.

What matters cloud or sun to-day
To him who wears the wreath of years
So many, and all like flowers at play
With wind and sunshine, while his ears
Hear only song on every way ?
More sweet than spring triumphant hears
Ring through the revel-rout of May
Are these, the notes that winter fears.

III.

Strong-hearted winter knows and fears
 The music made of love at play,
 Or haply loves the tune he hears
 From hearts fulfilled with flowering May,
 Whose molten music thaws his ears
 Late frozen, deaf but yesterday
 To sounds of dying and dawning years,
 Now quickened on his deathward way.

IV.

For deathward now lies winter's way
 Down the green vestibule of years
 That each year brightens day by day
 With flower and shower till hope scarce
 fears
 And fear grows wholly hope of May.
 But we—the music in our ears
 Made of love's pulses as they play
 The heart alone that makes it hears.

V.

The heart it is that plays and hears
 High salutation of to-day.
 Tongue falters, hand shrinks back, song fears
 Its own unworthiness to play
 Fit music for those eight sweet years,
 Or sing their blithe accomplished way.
 No song quite worth a young child's ears
 Broke ever even from birds in May.

VI.

There beats not in the heart of May,
 When summer hopes and springtide fears,
 There falls not from the height of day,
 When sunlight speaks and silence hears,
 So sweet a psalm as children play
 And sing, each hour of all their years,
 Each moment of their lovely way,
 And know not how it thrills our ears.

VII.

Ah child, what are we, that our ears
 Should hear you singing on your way,
 Should have this happiness? The years
 Whose hurrying wings about us play
 Are not like yours, whose flower-time fears
 Nought worse than sunlit showers in May,
 Being sinless as the spring, that hears
 Her own heart praise her every day.

VIII.

Yet we too triumph in the day
 That bare, to entrance our eyes and ears,
 To lighten daylight, and to play
 Such notes as darkness knows and fears,
 The child whose face illumines our way,

Whose voice lifts up the heart that hears
 Whose hand is as the hand of May
 To bring us flowers from eight full years.

COMPARISONS.

CHILD, when they say that others
 Have been or are like you,
 Babes fit to be your brothers,
 Sweet human drops of dew,
 Bright fruit of mortal mothers,
 What should one say or do?

We know the thought is treason,
 We feel the dream absurd;
 A claim rebuked of reason,
 That withers at a word:
 For never shone the season
 That bore so blithe a bird.

Some smiles may seem as merry,
 Some glances gleam as wise,
 From lips as like a cherry
 And scarce less gracious eyes;
 Eyes browner than a berry,
 Lips red as morning's rise.

But never yet rang laughter
 So sweet in gladdened ears
 Through wall and floor and rafter
 As all this household hears
 And rings response thereafter
 Till cloudiest weather clears.

When those your chosen of all men,
 Whose honey never cloy,
 Two lights whose smiles enthrall men,
 Were called at your age boys,
 Those mighty men, while small men,
 Could make no merrier noise.

Our Shakespeare, surely, daffed not
 More lightly pain aside
 From radiant lips that quaffed not
 Of forethought's tragic tide:
 Our Dickens, doubtless, laughed not
 More loud with life's first pride.

The dawn were not more cheerless
 With neither light nor dew
 Than we without the fearless
 Clear laugh that thrills us through;
 If ever child stood peerless,
 Love knows that child is you.

WHAT IS DEATH?

LOOKING on a page where stood
Graven of old on old-world wood
Death, and by the grave's edge grim,
Pale, the young man facing him,
Asked my well-beloved of me
Once what strange thing this might be,
Gaunt and great of limb.

Death, I told him: and, surprise
Deepening more his wildwood eyes
(Like some sweet fleet thing's whose breath
Speaks all spring though nought it saith),
Up he turned his rosebright face
Glorious with its seven years' grace,
Asking—What is death?

A CHILD'S PITY.

No sweeter thing than children's ways and
wiles,
Surely, we say, can gladden eyes and ears:
Yet sometime sweeter than their words or
smiles
Are even their tears.

To one for once a piteous tale was read,
How, when the murderous mother croco-
dile
Was slain, her fierce brood famished, and lay
dead,
Starved, by the Nile.

In vast green reed-beds on the vast gray slime
Those monsters motherless and helpless
lay,
Perishing only for the parent's crime
Whose seed were they.

Hours after, toward the dusk, our blithe
small bird
Of Paradise, who has our hearts in keeping,
Was heard or seen, but hardly seen or heard,
For pity weeping.

He was so sorry, sitting still apart,
For the poor little crocodiles, he said.
Six years had given him, for an angel's heart,
A child's instead.

Feigned tears the false beast shed for murder-
ous ends,
We know from travellers' tales of croco-
diles:

But these tears wept upon them of my friend's
Outshine his smiles.

What heavenliest angels of what heavenly city
Could match the heavenly heart in children
here?
The heart that hallowing all things with its
pity
Casts out all fear?

So lovely, so divine, so dear their laughter
Seems to us, we know not what could be
more dear:
But lovelier yet we see the sign thereafter
Of such a tear.

With sense of love half laughing and half
weeping
We met your tears, our small sweet-spirited
friend:
Let your love have us in its heavenly keeping
To life's last end.

A CHILD'S LAUGHTER.

ALL the bells of heaven may ring,
All the birds of heaven may sing,
All the wells on earth may spring,
All the winds on earth may bring
All sweet sounds together;
Sweeter far than all things heard,
Hand of harper, tone of bird,
Sound of woods at sundawn stirred,
Welling water's winsome word,
Wind in warm wan weather,

One thing yet there is, that none
Hearing ere its chime be done
Knows not well the sweetest one
Heard of man beneath the sun,
Hoped in heaven hereafter;
Soft and strong and loud and light,
Very sound of very light
Heard from morning's rosiest height,
When the soul of all delight
Fills a child's clear laughter.

Golden bells of welcome rolled
Never forth such notes, nor told
Hours so blithe in tones so bold,
As the radiant mouth of gold
Here that rings forth heaven.
If the golden-crested wren
Were a nightingale—why, then,

Something seen and heard of men
Might be half as sweet as when
Laughs a child of seven.

A CHILD'S THANKS.

How low soe'er men rank us,
How high soe'er we win,
The children far above us
Dwell, and they deign to love us,
With lovelier love than ours,
And smiles more sweet than flowers ;
As though the sun should thank us
For letting light come in.

With too divine complaisance,
Whose grace misleads them thus,
Being gods, in heavenly blindness
They call our worship kindness,
Our pebble-gift a gem :
They think us good to them,
Whose glance, whose breath, whose presence,
Are gifts too good for us.

The poet high and hoary
Of meres that mountains bind
Felt his great heart more often
Yearn, and its proud strength soften
From stern to tenderer mood,
At thought of gratitude
Shown than of song or story
He heard of hearts unkind.

But with what words for token
And what adoring tears
Of reverence risen to passion,
In what glad prostrate fashion
Of spirit and soul subdued,
May man show gratitude
For thanks of children spoken
That hover in his ears ?

The angels laugh, your brothers,
Child, hearing you thank me.
With eyes whence night grows sunny,
And touch of lips like honey,
And words like honey-dew :
But how shall I thank you ?
For gifts above all others
What guerdon-gift may be ?

What wealth of words caressing,
What choice of songs found best,
Would seem not as derision,
Found vain beside the vision

And glory from above
Shown in a child's heart's love ?
His part in life is blessing ;
Ours, only to be blest.

A CHILD'S BATTLES.

πῦξ ἀπὸ τὸν ἐβόων.—PINDAR.

PRAISE of the knights of old
May sleep : their tale is told,
And no man cares :
The praise which fires our lips is
A knight's whose fame eclipses
All of theirs.

The ruddiest light in heaven
Blazed as his birth-star seven
Long years ago :
All glory crown that old year
Which brought our stout small soldier
With the snow !

Each baby born has one
Star, for his friends a sun,
The first of stars :
And we, the more we scan it,
The more grow sure your planet,
Child, was Mars.

For each one flower, perchance,
Blossoms as his cognizance :
The snowdrop chill,
The violet un beholden,
For some : for you the golden
Daffodil.

Erect, a fighting flower,
It breasts the breeziest hour
That ever blew.
And bent or broke things brittle
Or frail, unlike a little
Knight like you.

Its flower is firm and fresh
And stout like sturdiest flesh
Of children : all
The strenuous blast that parches
Spring hurts it not till March is
Near his fall.

If winds that prate and fret
Remark, rebuke, regret,
Lament, or blame
The brave plant's martial passion,
It keeps its own free fashion
All the same.

We that would fain seem wise
Assume grave mouths and eyes
Whose looks reprove
Too much delight in battle:
But your great heart our prattle
Cannot move.

We say, small children should
Be placid, mildly good
And blandly meek:
Whereat the broad smile rushes
Full on your lips, and flushes
All your cheek.

If all the stars that are
Laughed out, and every star
Could here be heard,
Such peals of golden laughter
We should not hear, as after
Such a word.

For all the storm saith, still,
Stout stands the daffodil:
For all we say,
Howe'er he look demurely,
Our martialist will surely
Have his way.

We may not bind with bands
Those large and liberal hands,
Nor stay from fight,
Nor hold them back from giving:
No lean mean laws of living
Bind a knight.

And always here of old
Such gentle hearts and bold
Our land has bred:
How durst her eye rest else on
The glory shed from Nelson
Quick and dead?

Shame were it, if but one
Such once were born her son,
That one to have borne,
And brought him ne'er a brother:
His praise should bring his mother
Shame and scorn.

A child high-souled as he
Whose manhood shook the sea
Smiles haply here:
His face, where love lies basking,
With bright shut mouth seems asking,
What is fear?

The sunshine-colored fists
Beyond his dimpling wrists
Were never closed
For saving or for sparing—
For only deeds of daring
Predisposed.

Unclenched, the gracious hands
Let slip their gifts like sands
Made rich with ore
That tongues of beggars ravish
From small stout hands so lavish
Of their store.

Sweet hardy kindly hands
Like these were his that stands
With heel on gorge
Seen trampling down the dragon
On sign or flask or flagon,
Sweet Saint George.

Some tournament, perchance.
Of hands that couch no lance,
Might mark this spot
Your lists, if here some pleasant
Small Guenevere were present,
Lancelot.

My brave bright flower, you need
No foolish song, nor heed
It more than spring
The sighs of winter stricken
Dead when your haunts requicken
Here, my king.

Yet O, how hardly may
The wheels of singing stay
That whirl along
Bright paths whence echo raises
The phantom of your praises,
Child, my song!

Beyond all other things
That give my words fleet wings,
Fleet wings and strong,
You set their jesses ringing
Till hardly can I, singing,
Stint my song.

But all things better, friend,
And worse must find an end:
And, right or wrong,
'Tis time, lest rhyme should baffle,
I doubt to put a snaffle
On my song.

And never may your ear
Aught harsher hear or fear,
Nor wolfish night
Nor dog-toothed winter snarling
Behind your steps, my darling,
My delight!

For all the gifts you give
Me, dear, each day you live,
Of thanks above
All thanks that could be spoken
Take not my song in token,
Take my love.

A CHILD'S FUTURE.

WHAT will it please you, my darling, here-
after to be?
Fame upon land will you look for, or glory
by sea?
Gallant your life will be always, and all of it
free.
Free as the wind when the heart of the twi-
light is stirred
Eastward, and sounds from the springs of the
sunrise are heard:
Free—and we know not another as infinite
word.

Darkness or twilight or sunlight may compass
us round,
Hate may arise up against us, or hope may
confound;
Love may forsake us; yet may not the spirit
be bound.

Free in oppression of grief as in ardor of joy
Still may the soul be, and each to her strength
as a toy:
Free in the glance of the man as the smile of
the boy.
Freedom alone is the salt and the spirit that
gives
Life, and without her is nothing that verily
lives:
Death cannot slay her: she laughs upon
death and forgives.

Brightest and hardiest of roses anear and afar
Glitters the blithe little face of you, round as
a star:
Liberty bless you and keep you to be as you
are.

England and liberty bless you and keep you
to be
Worthy the name of their child and the sight
of their sea:
Fear not at all; for a slave, if he fears not, is
free.

SONNETS

ON ENGLISH DRAMATIC POETS.—(1590-1650.)

I.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

CROWNED, girdled, garbed and shod with
light and fire,
Son first-born of the morning, sovereign
star!
Soul nearest ours of all, that wert most far,
Most far off in the abysm of time, thy lyre
Hung highest above the dawn-enkindled
quire
Where all ye sang together, all that are.
And all the starry songs behind thy car
Rang sequence, all our souls acclaim thee sire.

'If all the pens that ever poets held
Had fed the feeling of their masters'
thoughts,'
And as with rush of hurtling chariots
The flight of all their spirits were impelled
Toward one great end, thy glory—nay, not
then, [men.
Not yet might'st thou be praised enough of

II.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Not if men's tongues and angels' all in one
Spake, might the word be said that might
speak Thee.

Streams, winds, woods, flowers, fields,
mountains, yea, the sea,
What power is in them all to praise the sun?
His praise is this,—he can be praised of none.

Man, woman, child, praise God for him;
but he

Exults not to be worshipped, but to be.
He is ; and, being, beholds his work well
done.

All joy, all glory, all sorrow, all strength, all
mirth,
Are his : without him, day were night on
earth.

Time knows not his from time's own period.
All lutes, all harps, all viols, all flutes, all
lyres,

Fall dumb before him ere one string suspires.
All stars are angels ; but the sun is God.

III.

BEN JONSON.

BROAD-BASED, broad-fronted, bounteous,
multiform,

With many a valley impleached with ivy
and vine,

Wherein the springs of all the streams run
wine,

And many a crag full-faced against the storm,
The mountain where thy Muse's feet made
warm

Those lawns that revelled with her dance
divine

Shines yet with fire as it was wont to shine
From tossing torches round the dance
aswarm.

Nor less, high-stationed on the gray grave
heights,

High-thoughted seers with heaven's heart-
kindling lights

Hold converse : and the herd of meaner
things

Knows or by fiery scourge or fiery shaft
When wrath on thy broad brows has risen,
and laughed,

Darkening thy soul with shadow of thunder-
ous wings.

IV.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

AN hour ere sudden sunset fired the west,
Arose two stars upon the pale deep east.

The hall of heaven was clear for night's
high feast,

Yet was not yet day's fiery heart at rest.
Love leapt up from his mother's burning
breast

To see those warm twin lights, as day de-
creased,

Wax wider, till when all the sun had ceased
As suns they shone from evening's kindled
crest.

Across them and between, a quickening fire,
Flamed Venus, laughing with appeased desire.

Their dawn, scarce lovelier for the gleam
of tears,

Filled half the hollow shell 'twixt heaven and
earth

With sound like moonlight, mingling moan
and mirth,

Which rings and glitters down the darkling
years.

V.

PHILIP MASSINGER.

CLOUDS here and there arisen an hour past
noon

Checkered our English heaven with length-
ening bars

And shadow and sound of wheel-winged
thunder-cars

Assembling strength to put forth tempest
soon,

When the clear still warm concord of thy tune
Rose under skies unscared by reddening
Mars

Yet, like a sound of silver speech of stars,
With full mild flame as of the mellowing moon.

Grave and great-hearted Massinger, thy face
High melancholy lights with loftier grace

Than gilds the brows of revel : sad and wise,
The spirit of thought that moved thy deeper
song,

Sorrow serene in soft calm scorn of wrong,
Speaks patience yet from thy majestic eyes.

VI.

JOHN FORD

HEW hard the marble from the mountain's
heart

Where hardest night holds fast in iron
gloom

Gems brighter than an April dawn in bloom,
That his Memnonian likeness thence may
start
Revealed, whose hand with high funereal art
Carved night, and chiselled shadow : be
the tomb
That speaks him famous graven with signs
of doom
Intrenched inevitably in lines athwart,
As on some thunder-blasted Titan's brow
His record of rebellion. Not the day
Shall strike forth music from so stern a
chord,
Touching this marble : darkness, none knows
how,
And stars impenetrable of midnight, may.
So looms the likeness of thy soul, John Ford.

VII.

JOHN WEBSTER.

THUNDER: the flesh quails, and the soul
bows down,
Night : east, west, south, and northward,
very night.
Star upon struggling star strives into sight,
Star after shuddering star the deep storms
drown.
The very throne of night, her very crown,
A man lays hand on, and usups her right.
Song from the highest of heaven's imperious
height
Shoots, as a fire to smite some towering town.
Rage, anguish, harrowing fear, heart-crazing
crime,
Make monstrous all the murderous face of
Time
Shown in the spherul orbit of a glass
Revolving. Earth cries out from all her
graves.
Frail, on frail rafts, across wide-wallowing
waves,
Shapes here and there of child and mother
pass.

VIII.

THOMAS DECKER.

Out of the depths of darkling life where sin
Laughs piteously that sorrow should not
know

Her own ill name, nor woe be counted woe.
Where hate and craft and lust make drearier
din
Than sounds through dreams that grief holds
revel in ;
What charm of joy-bells ringing, streams
that flow,
Winds that blow healing in each note they
blow,
Is this that the outer darkness hears begin?
O sweetest heart of all thy time save one,
Star seen for love's sake nearest to the sun,
Hung lamplike o'er a dense and doleful
city,
Not Shakespeare's very spirit, howe'er more
great,
Than thine toward man was more compassion-
ate,
Nor gave Christ praise from lips more sweet
with pity.

IX.

THOMAS MIDDLETON.

A wild moon riding high from cloud to cloud,
That sees and sees not, glimmering far
beneath,
Hell's children revel along the shuddering
heath
With dirge-like mirth and raiment like a
shroud :
A worse fair face than witchcraft's, passion-
proud,
With brows blood-flecked behind their
bridal wreath
And lips that bade the assassin's sword find
sheath
Deep in the heart whereto love's heart was
vowed :
A game of close contentious crafts and creeds
Played till white England bring black Spain
to shame :
A son's bright sword and brighter soul, whose
deeds
High conscience lights for mother's love
and fame :
Pure gypsy flowers, and poisonous courtly
weeds:
Such tokens and such trophies crown thy
name.

X.

THOMAS HEYWOOD.

TOM, if they loved thee best who called thee
 Tom,
 What else may all men call thee, seeing thus
 bright
 Even yet the laughing and the weeping
 light
 That still thy kind old eyes are kindled from?
 Small care was thine to assail and overcome
 Time and his child Oblivion : yet of right
 Thy name has part with names of lordlier
 might
 For English love and homely sense of home,
 Whose fragrance keeps thy small sweet bay-
 leaf young
 And gives it place aloft among thy peers
 Whence many a wreath once higher strong
 Time has hurled :
 And this thy praise is sweet on Shakespeare's
 tongue—
 ' O good old man, how well in thee appears
 The constant service of the antique world ! '

XI.

GEORGE CHAPMAN.

HIGH priest of Homer, not elect in vain,
 Deep trumpets blow before thee, shawms
 behind
 Mix music with the rolling wheels that
 wind
 Slow through the laboring triumph of thy
 train :
 Fierce history, molten in thy forging brain,
 Takes form and fire and fashion from thy
 mind,
 Tormented and transmuted out of kind :
 But howsœ'er thou shift thy strenuous strain,
 Like Tailor * smooth, like Fisher † swollen,
 and now
 Grim Yarrington ‡ scarce bloodier marked
 than thou,
 Then bluff as Mayne's § or broad-mouthed
 Barry's || glee,
 Proud still with hoar predominance of brow

* Author of *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*.† Author of *Fuinus Troes, or the True Trojans*.‡ Author of *Two Tragedies in One*.§ Author of *The City Match*.|| Author of *Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks*.

And beard like foam swept off the broad
 blown sea,
 Where'er thou go, men's reverence goes
 with thee.

XII.

JOHN MARSTON.

THE bitterness of death and bitterer scorn
 Breathes from the broad-leaved aloe-plant
 whence thou
 Wast fain to gather for thy bended brow
 A chaplet by no gentler forehead worn.
 Grief deep as hell, wrath hardly to be borne,
 Ploughed up thy soul till round the furrow-
 ing plough
 The strange black soil foamed, as a black
 beaked prow
 Bids night-black waves foam where its track
 has torn.
 Too faint the phrase for thee that only saith
 Scorn bitterer than the bitterness of death
 Pervades the sullen splendor of thy soul,
 Where hate and pain make war on force and
 fraud
 And all the strengths of tyrants ; whence un-
 flawed
 It keeps this noble heart of hatred whole.

XIII.

JOHN DAY.

DAY was a full-blown flower in heaven, alive
 With murmuring joy of bees and birds
 aswarm,
 When in the skies of song yet flushed and
 warm
 With music where all passion seems to strive
 For utterance, all things bright and fierce to
 drive
 Struggling along the splendor of the storm,
 Day for an hour put off his fiery form,
 And golden murmurs from a golden hive
 Across the strong bright summer wind were
 heard,
 And laughter soft as smiles from girls at
 play
 And loud from lips of boys brow-bound
 with May.
 Our mightiest age let fall its gentlest word,

When Song, in semblance of a sweet small
bird,
Lit fluttering on the light swift hand of Day.

XIV.

JAMES SHIRLEY.

THE dusk of day's decline was hard on dark
When evening trembled round thy glow-
worm lamp
That shone across her shades and dewy
damp
A small clear beacon whose benignant spark
Was gracious yet for loiterers' eyes to mark,
Though changed the watchword of our
English camp
Since the outposts rang round Marlowe's
lion ramp,
When thy steed's pace went ambling round
Hyde Park.

And in the thickening twilight under thee
Walks Davenant, pensive in the paths where
he,
The blithest throat that ever carolled love
In music made of morning's merriest heart,
Glad Suckling, stumbled from his seat above
And reeled on slippery roads of alien art.

XV.

THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN.

SONS born of many a loyal Muse to Ben,
All true-begotten, warm with wine or ale,
Bright from the broad light of his presence,
Hail!
Prince Randolph, nighest his throne of all
his men,
Being highest in spirit and heart who hailed
him then
King, nor might other spread so blithe a
sail:
Cartwright, a soul pent in with narrower
pale,
Praised of thy sire for manful might of pen:
Marmion, whose verse keeps away keen and
fine
The perfume of their Apollonian wine
Who shared with that stout sire of all and
thee
The exuberant chalice of his echoing shrine:
Is not your praise writ broad in gold which
he
Inscribed, that all who praise his name
should see?

XVI.

ANONYMOUS PLAYS:

'ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM.'

MOTHER whose womb brought forth our man
of men,
Mother of Shakespeare, whom all time ac-
claims
Queen therefore, sovereign queen of Eng-
lish dames,
Throned higher than sat thy sonless empress
then,
Was it thy son's young passion-guided pen
Which drew, reflected from encircling
flames,
A figure marked by the earlier of thy names
Wife, and from all her wedded kinswomen
Marked by the sign of murderess? Pale and
great,
Great in her grief and sin, but in her death
And anguish of her penitential breath
Greater than all her sin or sin-born fate,
She stands, the holocaust of dark desire,
Clothed round with song forever as with
fire.

XVII.

ANONYMOUS PLAYS.

YE too, dim watchfires of some darkling hour,
Whose fame forlorn time saves not nor pro-
claims
Forever, but forgetfulness defames
And darkness and the shadow of death de-
vour,
Lift up ye too your light, put forth your
power,
Let the far twilight feel your soft small
flames
And smile, albeit night name not even their
names,
Ghost by ghost passing, flower blown down
on flower:
That sweet-tongued shadow, like a star's that
passed
Singing, and light was from its darkness cast
To paint the face of Painting fair with
praise: *
And that wherein forefigured smiles the pure
Fraternal face of Word-worth's Elidure
Between two child-faced masks of merrier
days.†

* Doctor Dodypol. † Nobody and Somebody.

XVIII.

ANONYMOUS PLAYS.

MORE yet and more, and yet we mark not all:
 The Warning fain to bid fair women heed
 Its hard brief note of deadly doom and
 deed; *

The verse that strewed too thick with flowers
 the hall

Whence Nero watched his fiery festival; †
 That iron page wherein men's eyes who
 read

See, bruised and marred between two babes
 that bleed,

A mad red-handed husband's martyr fall; ‡
 The scene which crossed and streaked with
 mirth the strife

Of Henry with his sons and witchlike wife; §
 And that sweet pageant of the kindly fiend,

Who, seeing three friends in spirit and heart
 made one,

Crowned with good hap the true-love wiles
 he screened

In the pleached lanes of pleasant Edmon-
 ton. ||

XIX.

THE MANY.

I.

GREENE, garlanded with February's few
 flowers,

Ere March came in with Marlowe's rapt-
 urous rage:

Peele, from whose hand the sweet white
 locks of age

Took the mild chaplet woven of honored
 hours:

Nash, laughing hard: Lodge, flushed from
 lyric howers:

And **Lilly**, a goldfinch in a twisted cage

Fed by some gay great lady's pettish page
 Till short sweet songs gush clear like short
 spring showers:

Kid, whose grim sport still gambolled over
 graves:

And **Chettle**, in whose fresh funereal verse

* *A Warning for fair Women.*

† *The Tragedy of Nero*

‡ *A Yorkshire Tragedy.*

§ *Look about you.*

|| *The Merry Devil of Edminton.*

Weeps Marian yet on Robin's wildwood
 hearse:

Cooke, whose light boat of song one soft
 breath saves,

Sighed from a maiden's amorous mouth
 averse:

Live likewise ye: Time takes not you for
 slaves.

XX.

THE MANY.

II.

HAUGHTON, whose mirth gave woman all her
 will;

Field, bright and loud with laughing flower
 and bird

And keen alternate notes of land and gird:
Barnes, darkening once with Borgia's deeds
 the quill

Which tuned the passion of Parthenophil:

Blithe burly Porter, broad and bold of word:

Wilkins, a voice with strenuous pity stirred:

Turk Mason: Brewer, whose tongue drops
 honey still:

Rough Rowley, handling song with Esau's
 hand:

Light Nabbes: lean Sharpham, rank and
 raw by turn,

But fragrant with a forethought once of
 Burns:

Soft Davenport, sad-robed, but blithe and
 bland:

Brome, gypsy-led across the woodland
 ferns:

Praise be with all, and place among our band.

XXI.

EPILOGUE.

OUR mother, which wast twice, as history
 saith,

Found first among the nations: once, when
 she

Who bore thine ensign saw the God in thee
 Smite Spain, and bring forth Shakespeare:
 once, when death

Shrank, and Rome's bloodhounds cowered,
 at Milton's breath:

More than thy place, then first among the
 free,

More than that sovereign lordship of the
 sea
 Bequeathed to Cromwell from Elizabeth,
 More than thy fiery guiding-star, which Drake
 Hailed, and the deep saw lit again for Blake,
 More than all deeds wrought of thy strong
 right hand,

This praise keeps most thy fame's memorial
 strong,
 That thou wast head of all these streams of
 song,
 And time bows down to thee as Shake-
 speare's land.

A DARK MONTH.

'La maison sans enfants !' —VICTOR HUGO.

I.

A MONTH without sight of the sun
 Rising or reigning or setting
 Through days without use of the day,
 Who calls it the month of May?
 The sense of the name is undone
 And the sound of it fit for forgetting.

We shall not feel if the sun rise,
 We shall not care when it sets :
 If a nightingale make night's air
 As noontide, why should we care ?
 Till a light of delight that is done rise,
 Extinguishing gray regrets ;

Till a child's face lighten again
 On the twilight of older faces ;
 Till a child's voice fall as the dew
 On furrows with heat parched through
 And all but hopeless of grain,
 Refreshing the desolate places—

Fall clear on the ears of us hearkening
 And hungering for food of the sound
 And thirsting for joy of his voice :
 Till the hearts in us hear and rejoice,
 And the thoughts of them doubting and
 darkening
 Rejoice with a glad thing found.

When the heart of our gladness is gone,
 What comfort is left with us after ?
 When the light of our eyes is away,
 What glory remains upon May,
 What blessing of song is thereon
 If we drink not the light of his laughter ?

No small sweet face with the daytime
 To welcome, warmer than noon !

No sweet small voice as a bird's
 To bring us the day's first words !
 Mid May for us here is not Maytime :
 No summer begins with June.

A whole dead month in the dark,
 A dawn in the mists that o'ercome her
 Stifled and smothered and sad—
 Swift speed to it barren and bad !
 And return to us, voice of the lark,
 And remain with us, sunlight of summer.

II.

ALAS, what right has the dawn to glimmer,
 What right has the wind to do aught but
 moan ?
 All the day should be dimmer
 Because we are left alone.

Yesternorn like a sunbeam present
 Hither and thither a light step smiled,
 And made each place for us pleasant
 With the sense or the sight of a child.

But the leaves persist as before, and after
 Our parting the dull day still bears flowers ;
 And songs less bright than his laughter
 Deride us from birds in the bowers.

Birds, and blossoms, and sunlight only,
 As though such folly sufficed for spring !
 As though the house were not lonely
 For want of the child its king !

III.

ASLEEP and afar to-night my darling
 Lies, and heeds not the night,
 If winds be stirring or storms be snarling ;
 For his sleep is its own sweet light.

I sit where he sat beside me quaffing
The wine of story and song
Poured forth of immortal cups, and laughing
When mirth in the draught grew strong.

I broke the gold of the words, to melt it
For hands but seven years old,
And they caught the tale as a bird, and felt it
More bright than visible gold.

And he drank down deep, with his eyes broad
beaming,
Here in this room where I am,
The golden vintage of Shakespeare, gleaming
In the silver vessels of Lamb.

Here by my hearth where he was I listen
For the shade of the sound of a word,
Athirst for the birdlike eyes to glisten,
For the tongue to chirp like a bird.

At the blast of battle, how broad they bright-
ened,
Like fire in the spheres of stars,
And clung to the pictured page, and lightened
As keen as the heart of Mars!

At the touch of laughter, how swift it twit-
tered
The shrillest music on earth ;
How the lithe limbs laughed and the whole
child glittered
With radiant riot of mirth !

Our Shakespeare now, as a man dumb-
stricken,
Stands silent there on the shelf :
And my thoughts, that had song in the heart
of them, sicken,
And relish not Shakespeare's self.

And my mood grows moodier than Hamlet's
even,
And man delights not me,
But only the face that morn and even
My heart leapt only to see.

That my heart made merry within me seeing,
And sang as his laugh kept time :
But song finds now no pleasure in being,
And love no reason in rhyme.

IV.

MILD May-blossom and proud sweet bay-
flower,
What, for shame, would you have with us
here ?

It is not the month of the May-flower
This, but the fall of the year.

Flowers open only their lips in derision,
Leaves are as fingers that point in scorn :
The shows we see are a vision :
Spring is not verily born.

Vet boughs turn supple and buds grow sappy,
As though the sun were indeed the sun :
And all our words are happy
With all their birds save one.

But spring is over, but summer is over,
But autumn is over, and winter stands
With his feet sunk deep in the clover
And cowslips cold in his hands.

His hoar grim head has a hawthorn bonnet,
His gnarled gaunt hand has a gay green
staff
With new-blown rose-blossom on it :
But his laugh is a dead man's laugh.

The laugh of spring that the heart seeks after,
The hand that the whole world yearns to
kiss,
It rings not here in his laughter,
The sign of it is not this.

There is not strength in it left to splinter
Tall oaks, nor frost in his breath to sting :
Yet it is but a breath as of winter,
And it is not the hand of spring.

V.

THIRTY-ONE pale maidens, clad
All in mourning dresses,
Pass, with lips and eyes more sad
That it seems they should be glad,
Heads discrowned of crowns they had,
Gray for golden tresses.

Gray their girdles too for green,
And their veils dishevelled:
None would say, to see their mien,
That the least of these had been
Born no baser than a queen,
Reared where flower-fays revelled.

Dreams that strive to seem awake,
Ghosts that walk by daytime,
Weary winds the way they take,
Since, for one child's absent sake,
May knows well, whate'er things make
Sport, it is not Maytime.

VI.

A HAND at the door taps light
 As the hand of my heart's delight:
 It is but a full-grown hand,
 Yet the stroke of it seems to start
 Hope like a bird in my heart,
 Too feeble to soar or to stand.

To start light hope from her cover
 Is to raise but a kite for a plover
 If her wings be not fledged to soar.
 Desire, but in dreams, cannot ope
 The door that was shut upon hope
 When love went out at the door.

Well were it if vision could keep
 The lids of desire as in sleep
 Fast locked, and over his eyes
 A dream with the dark soft key
 In her hand might hover, and he
 Their keeper till morning rise;

The morning that brings after many
 Days fled with no light upon any
 The small face back which is gone;
 When the loved little hands once more
 Shall struggle and strain at the door
 They beat their summons upon.

VII.

If a soul for but seven days were cast out of
 heaven and its mirth,
 They would seem to her fears like as seventy
 years upon earth.

Even and morrow should seem to her sorrow
 as long
 As the passage of numberless ages in slumber-
 less song.

Dawn, roused by the lark, would be surely as
 dark in her sight
 As her measureless measure of shadowless
 pleasure was bright.

Noon, gilt but with glory of gold, would be
 hoary and gray
 In her eyes that had gazed on the depths, un-
 amazed with the day.

Night hardly would seem to make darker her
 dream never done,
 When it could but withhold what a man may
 behold of the sun.

For dreams would perplex, were the days that
 should vex her but seven,

The sight of her vision, made dark with
 division from heaven.

Till the light on my lonely way lighten that
 only now gleams,
 I too am divided from heaven and derided of
 dreams.

VIII.

A TWILIGHT fire-fly may suggest
 How flames the fire that feeds the sun:
 'A crooked figure may attest
 In little space a million.'

But this faint-figured verse, that dresses
 With flowers the bones of one bare month,
 Of all it would say scarce expresses
 In crooked ways a millenth.

A fire-fly tenders to the father
 Of fires a tribute something worth:
 My verse, a shard-borne beetle rather,
 Drones over scarce-illumined earth.

Some inches round me though it brighten
 With light of music-making thought,
 The dark indeed it may not lighten,
 The silence moves not, hearing nought.

Only my heart is eased with hearing,
 Only mine eyes are soothed with seeing,
 A face brought nigh, a footfall nearing,
 Till hopes take form and dreams have
 being.

IX.

As a poor man hungering stands with insatiate
 eyes and hands
 Void of bread
 Right in sight of men that feast while his
 famine with no least
 Crumb is fed,

Here across the garden-wall can I hear strange
 children call,
 Watch them play,
 From the windowed seat above, whence the
 goodlier child I love
 Is away.

Here the sights we saw together moved his
 fancy like a feather
 To and fro,

Now to wonder, and thereafter to the sunny
storm of laughter
Loud and low—

Sights engraven on storied pages where man's
tale of seven swift ages
All was told—
Seen of eyes yet bright from heaven—for the
lips that laughed were seven
Sweet years old.

X.

WHY should May remember
March, if March forget
The days that began with December,
The nights that a frost could fret?

All their griefs are done with
Now the bright months bless
Fit souls to rejoice in the sun with,
Fit heads for the wind's caress;

Souls of children quickening
With the whole world's mirth,
Heads closelier than field-flowers thickening
That crowd and illuminate earth,

Now that May's call musters
Files of baby bands
To marshal in joyfuller clusters
Than the flowers that encumber their hands.

Yet morose November
Found them no less gay,
With nought to forget or remember
Less bright than a branch of may.

All the seasons moving
Move their minds alike
Applauding, acclaiming, approving
All hours of the year that strike.

So my heart may fret not,
Wondering if my friend
Remember me not or forget not
Or ever the month find end.

Not that love sows lighter
Seed in children sown,
But that life being lit in them brighter
Moves fleetlier than even our own.

May nor yet September
Binds their hearts, that yet

Remember, forget, and remember,
Forget, and recall, and forget.

XI.

As light on a lake's face moving
Between a cloud and a cloud
Till night reclaim it, reproving
The heart that exults too loud,

The heart that watching rejoices
When soft it swims into sight
Applauded of all the voices
And stars of the windy night,

So brief and unsure, but sweeter
Than ever a moon dawn smiled,
Moves, measured of no tune's metre,
The song in the soul of a child;

The song that the sweet soul singing
Half listens, and hardly hears,
Though sweeter than joy-bells ringing
And brighter than joy's own tears;

The song that remembrance of pleasure
Begins, and forgetfulness ends
With a soft swift change in the measure
That rings in remembrance of friends

As the moon on the lake's face flashes,
So haply may gleam at whites
A dream through the dear deep lashes
Whereunder a child's eye smiles,

And the least of us all that love him
May take for a moment part
With angels around and above him,
And I find place in his heart.

XII.

CHILD, were you kinless and lonely—
Dear, were you kin to me—
My love were compassionate only
Or such as it needs would be.

But eyes of father and mother
Like sunlight shed on you shine:
What need you have heed of another
Such new strange love as is mine?

It is not meet if unruly
Hands take of the children's bread
And cast it to dogs; but truly
The dogs after all would be fed.

On crumbs from the children's table
That crumble, dropped from above
My heart feeds, fed with unstable
Loose waifs of a child's light love

Though love in your heart were brittle
As glass that breaks with a touch,
You haply would lend him a little
Who surely would give you much.

XIII.

HERE is a rough
Rude sketch of my friend,
Faint-colored enough
And unworthily penned.

Fearlessly fair
And triumphant he stands,
And holds unaware
Friends' hearts in his hands;

Stalwart and straight
As an oak that should bring
Forth gallant and great
Fresh roses in spring.

On the paths of his pleasure
All graces that wait
What metre shall measure,
What rhyme shall relate?

Each action, each motion,
Each feature, each limb,
Demands a devotion
In honor of him:

Head that the hand
Of a god might have blest,
Laid lustrous and bland
On the curve of its crest:

Mouth sweeter than cherries
Keen eyes as of Mars,
Browner than berries
And brighter than stars.

Nor color nor wordy
Weak song can declare
The stature how sturdy,
How stalwart his air.

As a king in his bright
Presence-chamber may be,
So seems he in height—
Twice higher than your knee.

As a warrior sedate
With reserve of his power,
So seems he in state—
As tall as a flower:

As a rose overtowering
The ranks of the rest
That beneath it lie cowering,
Less bright than their best.

And his hands are as sunny
As ruddy ripe corn
Or the browner-hued honey
From heather-bells borne.

When summer sits proudest,
Fulfilled with its mirth,
And rapture is loudest
In air and on earth,

The suns of all hours
That have ripened the roots
Bring forth not such flowers
And beget not such fruits.

And well though I know it,
As fain would I write,
Child, never a poet
Could praise you aright.

I bless you? the blessing
Were less than a jest
Too poor for expressing;
I come to be blest,

With humble and dutiful
Heart, from above:
Bless me, O my beautiful
Innocent love!

This rhyme in your praise
With a smile was begun;
But the goal of his ways
Is uncovered to none,

Nor pervious till after
The limit impend;
It is not in laughter
These rhymes of you end.

XIV.

SPRING, and fall, and summer, and winter,
Which may Earth love least of them all,
Whose arms embrace as their signs imprint
her,
Summer, or winter, or spring, or fall?

The clear-eyed spring with the wood-birds
mating.

The rose-red summer with eyes aglow,
The yellow fall with serene eyes waiting,
The wild-eyed winter with hair all snow?

Spring's eyes are soft, but if frosts benumb
her

As winter's own will her shrewd breath
sting :

Storms may rend the raiment of summer,
And fall grow bitter as harsh-lipped spring.

One sign for summer and winter guides me,
One for spring, and the like for fall:
Whichever from sight of my friend divides me,
That is the worst ill season of all.

xv.

WORSE than winter is spring
If I come not to sight of my king .
But then what a spring will it be
When my king takes homage of me !

I send his grace from afar
Homage, as though to a star;
As a shepherd whose flock takes flight
May worship a star by night.

As a flock that a wolf is upon
My songs take flight and are gone:
No heart is in any to sing
Aught but the praise of my king.

Fain would I once and again
Sing deeds and passions of men :
But ever a child's head gleams
Between my work and my dreams.

Between my hand and my eyes
The lines of a small face rise,
And the lines I trace and retrace
Are none but those of the face.

xvi.

TILL the tale of all this flock of days alike
All be done,

Weary days of waiting till the month's hand
strike

Thirty-one,
Till the clock's hand of the month break off,
and end

With the clock,
Till the last and whitest sheep at last be
penned
Of the flock,

I their shepherd keep the count of night and
day

With my song,
Though my song be, like this month which
once was May
All too long.

xvii.

THE incarnate sun, a tall strong youth,
On old Greek eyes in sculpture smiled:
But trulier had it given the truth
To shape him like a child.

No face full-grown of all our dearest
So lightens all our darkness, none
Most loved of all our hearts hold nearest
So far outshines the sun,

As when with sly shy smiles that feign
Doubt if the hour be clear, the time
Fit to break off my work again
Or sport of prose or rhyme,

My friend peers in on me with merry
Wise face, and though the sky stay dim
The very light of day, the very
Sun's self comes in with him.

xviii.

OUT of sight,
Out of mind !
Could the light
Prove unkind ?

Can the sun
Quite forget
What was done
Ere he set ?

Does the moon
When she wanes
Leave no tune
That remains

In the void
Shell of night
Overcloved
With her light ?

Must the shore
At low tide
Feel no more
Hope or pride,

No intense
Joy to be,
In the sense
Of the sea—

In the pulses
Of her shocks
It repulses,
When its rocks

Thrill and ring
As with glee?
Has my king
Cast off me,

Whom no bird
Flying south
Brings one word
From his mouth?

Not the ghost
Of a word
Riding post
Have I heard,

Since the day
When my king
Took away
With him spring,

And the cup
Of each flower
Shrivelled up
That same hour,

With no light
Left behind.
Out of sight,
Out of mind!

XIX.

BECAUSE I adore you
And fall
On the knees of my spirit before you—
After all,

You need not insult,
My king,
With neglect, though your spirit exult
In the spring,

Even me, though not worth,
God knows,
One word of you sent me in mirth,
Or one rose

Out of all in your garden
That grow
Where the frost and the wind never harden
Flakes of snow,

Nor ever is rain
At all,
But the roses rejoice to remain
Fair and tall—

The roses of love,
More sweet
Than blossoms that rain from above
Round our feet,

When under high bowers
We pass,
Where the west wind freckles with flowers
All the grass.

But a child's thoughts bear
More bright
Sweet visions by day, and more fair
Dreams by night,

Than summer's whole treasure
Can be :
What am I that his thought should take
pleasure,
Then, in me?

I am only my love's
True lover,
With a nestful of songs, like doves
Under cover,

That I bring in my cap
Fresh caught,
To be laid on my small king's lap—
Worth just nought.

Yet it haply may hap
That he,
When the mirth in his veins is as sap
In a tree,

Will remember me too
Some day
Ere the transit be thoroughly through
Of this May—

Or perchance, if such grace
May be,
Some night when I dream of his face,
Dream of me.

Or if this be too high
A hope
For me to prefigure in my
Horoscope,

He may dream of the place
Where we
Basked once in the light of his face
Who now see

Nought brighter, not one
Thing bright,
Than the stars and the moon and the sun,
Day nor night.

xx.

Day by darkling day,
Overpassing, bears away
Somewhat of the burden of this weary May.

Night by numbered night,
Waning, brings more near in sight
Hope that grows to vision of my heart's de-
light.

Nearer seems to burn
In the dawn's rekindling urn
Flame of fragrant incense, hailing his return.

Louder seems each bird
In the brightening branches heard
Still to speak some ever more delightful word.

All the mists that swim
Round the dawns that grow less dim
Still wax brighter and more bright with hope
of him.

All the suns that rise
Bring that day more near our eyes
When the sight of him shall clear our clouded
skies.

All the winds that roam
Fruitful fields of fruitless foam
Blow the bright hour near that brings his
bright face home.

xxi.

I HEAR of two far hence
In a garden met,
And the fragrance blown from thence
Fades not yet.

The one is seven years old,
And my friend is he:

But the years of the other have told
Eighty-three.

To hear these twain converse
Or to see them greet
Were sweeter than softest verse
May be sweet.

The hoar old gardener there
With an eye more mild
Perchance than his mild white hair
Meets the child.

I had rather hear the words
That the twain exchange
Than the songs of all the birds
There that range,

Call, chirp, and twitter there
Through the garden-beds
Where the sun alike sees fair
Those two heads,

And which may holier be
Held in heaven of those
Or more worth heart's thanks to see
No man knows.

xxii.

OF such is the kingdom of heaven.
No glory that ever was shed
From the crowning star of the seven
That crown the north world's head,

No word that ever was spoken
Of human or godlike tongue,
Gave ever such godlike token
Since human harps were strung.

No sign that ever was given
To faithful or faithless eyes
Showed ever beyond clouds riven
So clear a Paradise.

Earth's creeds may be seventy times seven
And blood have defiled each creed:
If of such be the kingdom of heaven,
It must be heaven indeed.

xxiii.

THE wind on the downs is bright
As though from the sea:
And morning and night
Take comfort again with me.

He is nearer to-day,
Each night to each morning saith,

Whose return shall revive dead May
With the balm of his breath.

The sunset says to the moon,
He is nearer to-night
Whose coming in June
Is looked for more than the light.

Bird answers to bird,
Hour passes the sign on to hour,
And for joy of the bright news heard
Flower murmurs to flower.

The ways that were glad of his feet
In the woods that he knew
Grow softer to meet
The sense of his footfall anew.

He is near now as day,
Says hope to the new-born light:
He is near now as June is to May,
Says love to the night.

XXIV.

GOOD things I keep to console me
For lack of the best of all,
A child to command and control me,
Bid come and remain at his call.

Sun, wind, and woodland and highland,
Give all that ever they gave:
But my world is a cultureless island,
My spirit a masterless slave.

And friends are about me, and better
At summons of no man stand:
But I pine for the touch of a fetter,
The curb of a strong king's hand.

Each hour of the day in her season
Is mine to be served as I will:
And for no more exquisite reason
Are all served idly and ill.

By slavery my sense is corrupted,
My soul not fit to be free:
I would fain be controlled, interrupted,
Compelled as a thrall may be.

For fault of spur and of bridle
I tire of my stall to death:
My sail flaps joyless and idle
For want of a small child's breath.

XXV.

WHITER and whiter
The dark lines grow,

And broader opens and brighter
The sense of the text below.

Nightfall and morrow
Bring nigher the boy
Whom wanting we want not sorrow,
Whom having we want no joy.

Clearer and clearer
The sweet sense grows
Of the word which hath summer for heare,
The word on the lips of the rose.

Duskily dwindles
Each deathlike day,
Till June rearing its kindles
The depth of the darkness of May.

XXVI.

*'In his bright radiance and collateral light
Must I be comforted, not in his sphere.'*

STARS in heaven are many,
Suns in heaven but one:
Nor for man may any
Star supplant the sun.

Many a child as joyous
As our far-off king
Meets as though to annoy us
In the paths of spring.

Sure as spring gives warning,
All things dance in tune:
Sun on Easter morning,
Cloud and windy moon,

Stars between the tossing
Boughs of tuneful trees,
Sails of ships recrossing
Leagues of dancing seas;

Best, in all this playtime,
Best of all in tune,
Girls more glad than Maytime,
Boys more bright than June;

Mixed with all those dances,
Far through field and street
Sing their silent glances,
Ring their radiant feet.

Flowers wherewith May crowned us
Fall ere June be crowned:
Children blossom round us
All the whole year round.

Is the garland worthless
For one rose the less,
And the feast made mirthless?
Love, at least, says yes.

Strange it were, with many
Stars enkindling air,
Should but one find any
Welcome: strange it were,

Had one star alone won
Praise for light from far:
Nay, love needs his own one
Bright particular star.

Hope and recollection
Only lead him right
In its bright reflection
And collateral light.

Find as yet we may not
Comfort in its sphere:
Yet these days will weigh not
When it warms us here;

When full-orbed it rises,
Now divine afar:
None in all the skies is
Half so good a star;

None that seers importune
Till a sign be won:
Star of our good fortune,
Rise and reign, our sun!

XXVII.

I PASS by the small room now forlorn
Where once each night as I passed I knew
A child's bright sleep from even to morn
Made sweet the whole night through.

As a soundless shell, as a songless nest,
Seems now the room that was radiant then
And fragrant with his happier rest
Than that of slumbering men.

The day therein is less than the day,
The night is indeed night now therein:
Heavier the dark seems there to weigh,
And slower the dawns begin,

As a nest fulfilled with birds, as a shell
Fulfilled with breath of a god's own hymn,
Again shall be this bare blank cell,
Made sweet again with him.

XXVIII.

SPRING darkens before us,
A flame going down,
With chant from the chorus
Of days without crown—
Cloud, rain, and sonorous
Soft wind on the down.

She is wearier not of us
Than we of the dream
That spring was to love us
And joy was to gleam
Through the shadows above us
That shift as they stream.

Half dark and half hoary,
Float far on the loud
Mild wind, as a glory
Half pale and half proud
From the twilight of story,
Her tresses of cloud;

Like phantoms that glimmer
Of glories of old
With ever yet dimmer
Pale circlets of gold
As darkness grows grimmer
And memory more cold.

Like hope growing clearer
With wane of the moon,
Shines toward us the nearer
Gold frontlet of June,
And a face with it dearer
Than midsummer noon.

XXIX.

YOU send me your love in a letter,
I send you my love in a song:
Ah child, your gift is the better,
Mine does you but wrong.

No fame, were the best less brittle,
No praise, were it wide as earth,
Is worth so much as a little
Child's love may be worth.

We see the children above us
As they might angels above:
Come back to us, child, if you love us,
And bring us your love.

XXX.

No time for books or for letters:
What time should there be?
No room for tasks and their fetters:
Full room to be free.

The wind and the sun and the Maytime
 Had never a guest
 More worthy the most that his playtime
 Could give of its best.

If rain should come on, peradventure,
 (But sunshine forbid!)
 Vain hope in us haply might venture
 To dream as it did.

But never may come, of all comers
 Least welcome, the rain,
 To mix with his servant the summer's
 Rose-garlanded train!

He would write, but his hours are as busy
 As bees in the sun,
 And the jubilant whirl of their dizzy
 Dance never is done.

The message is more than a letter,
 Let love understand,
 And the thought of his joys even better
 Than sight of his hand.

XXXI.

WIND, high-souled, full-hearted
 South-west wind of the spring'
 Ere April and earth had parted,
 Skies, bright with thy forward wing,
 Grew dark in an hour with the shadow behind
 it, that bade not a bird dare sing.

Wind whose feet are sunny,
 Wind whose wings are cloud,
 With lips more sweet than honey
 Still, speak they low or loud,
 Rejoice now again in the strength of thine
 heart: let the depth of thy soul wax
 proud.

We hear thee singing or sighing,
 Just not given to sight,
 All but visibly flying
 Between the clouds and the light,

And the light in our hearts is enkindled, the
 shadow therein of the clouds put to
 flight.

From the gift of thine hands we gather
 The core of the flowers therein,
 Keen glad heart of heather,
 Hot sweet heart of whin,
 Twin breaths in thy godlike breath close
 blended of wild spring's wildest of
 kin.

All but visibly beating
 We feel thy wings in the far
 Clear waste, and the plumes of them fleet-
 ing,
 Soft as swan's plumes are,
 And strong as a wild swan's pinions, and
 swift as the flash of the flight of a star.

As the flight of a planet enkindled
 Seems thy far soft flight
 Now May's reign has dwindled
 And the crescent of June takes light
 And the presence of summer is here, and the
 hope of a welcomer presence in sight.

Wind, sweet-souled, great-hearted
 Southwest wind on the wold!
 From us is a glory departed
 That now shall return as of old,
 Borne back on thy wings as on eagle's ex-
 panding, and crowned with the sun-
 dawn's gold.

There is not a flower but rejoices,
 There is not a leaf but has heard:
 All the fields find voices,
 All the woods are stirred:
 There is not a nest but is brighter because of
 the coming of one bright bird.

Out of dawn and morning,
 Noon and afternoon,
 The sun to the world gives warning
 Of news that brightens the moon;
 And the stars all night exult with us, hearing
 of joy that shall come with June.

SUNRISE.

If the wind and the sunlight of April and August had mingled the past and here-after

In a single adorable season whose life were a rapture of love and of laughter,
And the blithest of singers were back with a song; if again from his tomb as from prison,

If again from the night or the twilight of ages Aristophanes had arisen,
With the gold-feathered wings of a bird that were also a god upon earth at his shoulders,

And the gold-flowing laugh of the manhood of old at his lips, for a joy to beholders,
He alone unrebuked of presumption were able to set to some adequate measure
The delight of our eyes in the dawn that restores them the sun of their sense and the pleasure.

For the days of the darkness of spirit are over for all of us here, and the season
When desire was a longing, and absence a thorn, and rejoicing a word without reason.

For the roof overhead of the pines is astir with delight as of jubilant voices,
And the floor underfoot of the bracken and heather alive as a heart that rejoices.

For the house that was childless awhile, and the light of it darkened, the pulse of it dwindled,

Rings radiant again with a child's bright feet, with the light of his face is rekindled.

And the ways of the meadows that knew him, the sweep of the down that the sky's belt closes,

Grow gladder at heart than the soft wind made them whose feet were but fragrant with roses,

Though the fall of the year be upon us, who trusted in June and by June were defrauded,

And the summer that brought us not back the desire of our eyes be gone hence unapplauded.

For July came joyless among us, and August went out from us arid and sterile,

And the hope of our hearts, as it seemed,

was no more than a flower that the seasons imperil,

And the joy of our hearts, as it seemed, than a thought which regret had not heart remember,

Till four dark months overpast were atoned for, and summer began in September.

Hark, April again as a bird in the house with a child's voice hither and thither:

See, May in the garden again with a child's face cheering the woods ere they wither.

June laughs in the light of his eyes, and July on the sunbright cheeks of him slumbers,

And August glows in a smile more sweet than the cadence of gold-mouthed numbers.

In the morning the sight of him brightens the sun, and the noon with delight in him flushes,

And the silence of nightfall is music about him as soft as the sleep that it hushes.

We awake with a sense of a sunrise that is not a gift of the sundawn's giving,

And a voice that salutes us is sweeter than all sounds else in the world of the living.

And a presence that warms us is brighter than all in the world of our visions beholden,

Though the dreams of our sleep were as those that the light of a world without grief makes golden.

For the best that the best of us ever devised as a likeness of heaven and its glory,

What was it of old, or what is it and will be forever, in song or in story,

Or in shape or in color of carved or painted resemblance, adored of all ages,

But a vision recorded of children alive in the pictures of old or the pages?

Where children are not, heaven is not, and heaven if they come not again shall be never:

But the face and the voice of a child are assurance of heaven and its promise forever.

A MIDSUMMER HOLIDAY.

THE SEABOARD.

THE sea is at ebb, and the sound of her utmost word
Is soft as the least wave's lapse in a still small reach.

From bay into bay, on quest of a goal deferred,
From headland ever to headland and breach to breach

Where earth gives ear to the message that all days preach

With changes of gladness and sadness that cheer and chide,

The lone way lures me along by a chance untried

That haply, if hope dissolve not and faith be whole,

Not all for nought shall I seek, with a dream for guide,

The goal that is not, and ever again the goal.

The trackless ways are untravelled of sail or bird ;

The hoar wave hardly recedes from the soundless beach.

The silence of instant noon goes nigh to be heard,

The viewless void to be visible : all and each,
A closure of calm no clamor of storm can breach

Concludes and confines and absorbs them on either side,

All forces of light and of life and the live world's pride,

Sands hardly ruffled by ripples that hardly roll
Seem ever to show as in reach of a swift brief stride

The goal that is not, and ever again the goal.

The waves are a joy to the seamew, the meads to the herd,

And a joy to the heart is a goal that it may not reach.

No sense that for ever the limits of sense engird,

No hearing or sight that is vassal to form or speech,

Learns ever the secret that shadow and silence teach,

Hears ever the notes that or ever they swell subside,

Sees ever the light that lights not the loud world's tide,

Clasps ever the cause of the lifelong scheme's control

Wherethrough we pursue, till the waters of life be dried,

The goal that is not, and ever again the goal.

Friend, what have we sought or seek we, whate'er betide,

Though the seaboard shift its mark from afar descried,

But aims whence ever anew shall arise the soul ?

Love, thought, song, life, but show for a glimpse and hide

The goal that is not, and ever again the goal.

A HAVEN.

EAST and north a waste of waters, south and west

Lonelier lands than dreams in sleep would feign to be,

When the soul goes forth on travel, and is prest

Round and compassed in with clouds that flash and flee.

Dells without a streamlet, downs without a tree,

Cirques of hollow cliff that crumble, give their guest

Little hope, till hard at hand he pause, to see
Where the small town smiles, a warm still sea-side nest.

Many a lone long mile, by many a headland's crest,

Down by many a garden dear to bird and bee,

Up by many a sea-down's bare and breezy breast,

Winds the sandy strait of road where flowers run free.

Here along the deep steep lanes by field and lea

Knights have carolled, pilgrims chanted, on their quest,

Haply, ere a roof rose toward the bleak strand's lee,

Where the small town smiles, a warm still sea-side nest.

Are the wild lands cursed perchance of time,
 or blest,
 Sad with fear or glad with comfort of the sea ?
 Are the ruinous towers of churches fallen on
 rest

Watched of wanderers woful now, glad once
 as we,

When the night has all men's eyes and hearts
 in fee,

When the soul bows down dethroned and
 dispossessed ?

Yet must peace keep guard, by day's and
 night's decree,

Where the small town smiles, a warm still
 sea-side nest.

Friend, the lonely land is bright for you and
 me

All its wild ways through : but this methinks
 is best,

Here to watch how kindly time and change
 agree

Where the small town smiles, a warm still
 sea-side nest.

ON A COUNTRY ROAD.

ALONG these low pleached lanes, on such a
 day,

So soft a day as this, through shade and sun,
 With glad grave eyes that scanned the glad
 wild way,

And hearts still hovering o'er a song begun,
 And smile that warmed the world with benison,

Our father, lord long since of lordly rhyme,
 Long since hath haply ridden, when the lime
 Bloomed broad above him, flowering where
 he came.

Because thy passage once made warm this
 clime,

Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy name.

Each year that England clothes herself with
 May,

She takes thy likeness on her. Time hath
 spun

Fresh raiment all in vain and strange array
 For earth and man's new spirit, fain to shun
 Things past for dreams of better to be won,
 Through many a century since thy funeral
 chime

Rang, and men deemed it death's most dire-
 ful crime

To have spared not thee for very love or
 shame;

And yet, while mists round last year's me-
 mories climb,

Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy name.

Each turn of the old wild road whereon we
 stray,

Meseems, might bring us face to face with
 one

Whom seeing we could not but give thanks,
 and pray

For England's love our father and her son

To speak with us as once in days long done
 With all men, sage and churl and monk and
 mime,

Who knew not as we know the soul sublime
 That sang for song's love more than lust of
 fame,

Yet, though this be not, yet, in happy time,
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy name.

Friend, even as bees about the flowering
 thyme,

Years crowd on years, till hoar decay begrime
 Names once beloved; but, seeing the sun the
 same,

As birds of autumn fain to praise the prime,
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy name.

THE MILL GARDEN.

STATELY stand the sunflowers, glowing down
 the garden-side,

Ranged in royal rank arow along the warm
 gray wall,

Whence their deep disks burn at rich midnight
 afire with pride,

Even as though their beams indeed were sun-
 beams, and the tall

Sceptral stems bore stars whose reign endures,
 not flowers that fall.

Lowlier laughs and basks the kindlier flower
 of homelier fame,

Held by love the sweeter that it blooms in
 Shakespeare's name,

Fragrant yet as though his hand had touched
 and made it thrill,

Like the whole world's heart, with warm new
 life and gladdening flame.

Fair befall the fair green close that lies below
 the mill!

Softlier here the flower-soft feet of refluxent
 seasons glide,

Lightlier breathes the long low note of change's gentler call.

Wind and storm and landslip feed the lone sea's gulf outside,

Half a seamew's first flight hence; but scarce may these appal

Peace, whose perfect seal is set for signet here on all.

Steep and deep and sterile, under fields no plough can tame,

Did the cliffs full-fledged with poppies red as love or shame.

Wide wan daisies bleak and bold, or herbage harsh and chill;

Here the full clove pinks and wallflowers crown the love they claim.

Fair befall the fair green close that lies below the mill!

All the place breathes low, but not for fear lest ill betide,

Soft as roses answering roses, or a dove's recall.

Little heeds it how the seaward banks may stoop and slide,

How the winds and years may hold all outer things in thrall,

How their wrath may work on hoar church tower and boundary wall.

Far and wide the waste and ravin of their rule proclaim

Change alone the changeless lord of things, alone the same:

Here a flower is stronger than the winds that work their will,

Or the years that wing their way through darkness toward their aim.

Fair befall the fair green close that lies below the mill!

Friend, the home that smiled us welcome hither when we came,

When we pass again with summer, surely should reclaim

Somewhat given of heart's thanksgiving more than words fulfil—

More than song, were song more sweet than all but love, might frame.

Fair befall the fair green close that lies below the mill!

A SEA-MARK.

RAINS have left the sea-blanks ill to climb:
Wave-ward sinks the loosening seaboard's floor;

Half the sliding cliffs are mire and slime.

Earth, a fruit rain-rotted to the core,
Drops dissolving down in flakes, that pour
Dense as gouts from eaves grown foul with grime.

One sole rock which years that scathe not score

Stands a sea-mark in the tides of time.

Time were even as even the rainiest clime,
Life were even as even this lapsing shore,
Might not aught outlive their trustless prime:

Vainly fear would wail or hope implore,
Vainly grief revile or love adore

Seasons clothed in sunshine, rain, or rime.

Now for me one comfort held in store

Stands a sea-mark in the tides of time.

Once, by fate's default or chance's crime,
Each apart, our burdens each we bore;
Heard, in monotonies like bells that chime,
Chime the sounds of sorrows, float and soar
Joy's full carols, near or far before;
Heard not yet across the alternate rhyme
Time's tongue tell what sign set fast of yore
Stands a sea-mark in the tides of time.

Friend, the sign we knew not heretofore
Towers in sight here present and sublime.

Faith in faith established evermore

Stands a sea-mark in the tides of time.

THE CLIFFSIDE PATH.

SEAWARD goes the sun, and homeward by the down

We, before the night upon his grave be sealed.
Low behind us lies the bright steep murmuring town,

High before us heaves the steep rough silent field.

Breach by ghastlier breach, the cliffs collapsing yield:

Half the path is broken, half the banks divide;
Flawed and crumbled, riven and rent, they cleave and slide

Toward the ridged and wrinkled waste of girdling sand

Deep beneath, whose furrows tell how far and wide

Wind is lord and change is sovereign of the strand.

Star by star on the unsunned waters twirling down,

Golden spear-points glance against a silver shield.

Over banks and bents, across the headland's crown,
 As by pulse of gradual plumes through twilight wheeled,
 Soft as sleep, the waking wind awakes the weald.
 Moor and copse and fallow, near or far descried,
 Feel the mild wings move, and gladden where they glide:
 Silence, uttering love that all things understand,
 Bids the quiet fields forget that hard beside
 Wind is lord and change is sovereign of the strand.

Yet may sight, ere all the hoar soft shade grow brown,
 Hardly reckon half the rifts and rents unhealed
 Where the scarred cliffs downward sundering drive and drown,
 Hewn as if with stroke of swords in tempest steeled,
 Wielded as the night's will and the wind's may wield.
 Crowned and zoned in vain with flowers of autumn-tide,
 Soon the blasts shall break them, soon the waters hide;
 Soon, where late we stood, shall no man ever stand.
 Life and love seek harborage on the landward side:
 Wind is lord and change is sovereign of the strand.

Friend, though man be less than these, for all his pride,
 Yet, for all his weakness, shall not hope abide?
 Wind and change can wreck but life and waste but land:
 Truth and trust are sure, though here till all subside
 Wind is lord and change is sovereign of the strand.

IN THE WATER.

THE sea is awake, and the sound of the song
 of the joy of her waking is rolled
 From afar to the star that recedes, from anear
 to the wastes of the wild wide shore.
 Her call is a trumpet compelling us homeward:
 if dawn in her east be acold,

From the sea shall we crave not her grace to
 rekindle the life that it kindled before,
 Her breath to requicken, her bosom to rock
 us, her kisses to bless as of yore?
 For the wind, with his wings half open, at
 pause in the sky, neither fettered nor
 free,
 Leans waveward and flutters the ripple to
 laughter: and fain would the twain of
 us be
 Where lightly the wave yearns forward from
 under the curve of the deep dawn's
 dome,
 And, full of the morning and fired with the
 pride of the glory thereof and the glee,
 Strike out from the shore as the heart in us
 bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

Life holds not an hour that is better to live
 in: the past is a tale that is told,
 The future a sun-flecked shadow, alive and
 asleep, with a blessing in store.
 As we give us again to the waters, the rapture
 of limbs that the waters enfold
 Is less than the rapture of spirit whereby,
 though the burden it quits were sore,
 Our souls and the bodies they wield at their
 will are absorbed in the life they
 adore—
 In the life that endures no burden, and bows
 not the forehead, and bends not the
 knee—
 In the life everlasting of earth and of heaven,
 in the laws that atone and agree,
 In the measureless music of things, in the
 fervor of forces that rest or that roam,
 That cross and return and reissue, as I after
 you and as you after me
 Strike out from the shore as the heart in us
 bids and beseeches, athirst for the
 foam.

For, albeit he were less than the least of
 them, haply the heart of a man may be
 bold
 To rejoice in the word of the sea as a mother's
 that saith to the son she bore,
 Child, was not the life in thee mine, and my
 spirit the breath in thy lips from of
 old?
 Have I let not thy weakness exult in my
 strength, and thy foolishness learn of
 my lore?
 Have I helped not or healed not thine an-
 guish, or made not the might of thy
 gladness more?

And surely his heart should answer, The light
of the love of my life is in thee.

She is fairer than earth, and the sun is not
fairer, the wind is not blither than she :
From my youth hath she shown me the joy of
her bays that I crossed, of her cliffs
that I clomb.

Till now that the twain of us here, in desire
of the dawn and in trust of the sea,
Strike out from the shore as the heart in us
bids and beseeches, athirst for the
foam.

Friend, earth is a harbor of refuge for winter,
a covert whereunder to flee

When day is the vassal of night, and the
strength of the hosts of her mightier
than he ;

But here is the presence adored of me, here
my desire is at rest and at home.

There are cliffs to be climbed upon land, there
are ways to be trodden and ridden :
but we

Strike out from the shore as the heart in us
bids and beseeches, athirst for the
foam.

THE SUNBOWS.

SPRAY of song that springs in April, light of
love that laughs through May,
Live and die and live forever: nought of all
things far less fair

Keeps a surer life than these that seem to
pass like fire away.

In the souls they live which are but all the
brighter that they were ;

In the hearts that kindle, thinking what de-
light of old was there.

Wind that shapes and lifts and shifts them
bids perpetual memory play

Over dreams and in and out of deeds and
thoughts which seem to wear

Light that leaps and runs and revels through
the springing flames of spray.

Dawn is wild upon the waters where we drink
of dawn to-day :

Wide, from wave to wave rekindling in re-
bound through radiant air,

Flash the fires unweaved and woven again of
wind that works in play,

Working wonders more than heart may note
or sight may wellnigh dare,

Wefths of rarer light than colors rain from
heaven, though this be rare.

Arch on arch unbuilt in building, reared and
ruined ray by ray.

Breaks and brightens, laughs and lessens,
even till eyes may hardly bear

Light that leaps and runs and revels through
the springing flames of spray.

Year on year sheds light and music rolled
and flashed from bay to bay

Round the summer capes of time and winter
headlands keen and bare

Whence the soul keeps watch, and bids her
vassal memory watch and pray,

If perchance the dawn may quicken, or per-
chance the midnight spare.

Silence quells not music, darkness takes not
sunlight in her snare ;

Shall not joys endure that perish ? Yea,
saith dawn, though night say nay :

Life on life goes out, but very life enkindles
everywhere

Light that leaps and runs and revels through
the springing flames of spray.

Friend, were life no more than this is, well
would yet the living fare.

All aflower and all afire and all flung heaven-
ward, who shall say

Such a flash of life were worthless ? This is
worth a world of care—

Light that leaps and runs and revels through
the springing flames of spray.

ON THE VERGE.

HERE begins the sea that ends not till the
world's end. Where we stand,

Could we know the next high sea-mark set
beyond these waves that gleam,

We should know what never man hath
known, nor eye of man hath scanned.

Nought beyond these coiling clouds that melt
like fume of shrines that steam

Breaks or stays the strength of waters till
they pass our bounds of dream.

Where the waste Land's End leans westward,
all the seas it watches roll

Find their border fixed beyond them, and a
worldwide shore's control :

These whereby we stand no shore beyond us
limits: these are free.

Gazing hence, we see the water that grows
iron round the Pole,

From the shore that hath no shore beyond it
set in all the sea.

Sail on sail along the sea-line fades and
flashes; here on land
Flash and fade the wheeling wings on wings
of mews that plunge and scream.
Hour on hour along the line of life and time's
evasive strand
Shines and darkens, wanes and waxes, slays
and dies: and scarce they seem
More than motes that thronged and trembled
in the brief noon's breath and beam.
Some with crying and wailing, some with
notes like sound of bells that toll,
Some with sighing and laughing, some with
words that blessed and made us whole,
Passed, and left us, and we know not what
they were, nor what were we.
Would we know, being mortal? Never breath
of answering whisper stole
From the shore that hath no shore beyond it
set in all the sea.

Shadows, would we question darkness? Ere
our eyes and brows be fanned
Round with airs of twilight, washed with dew
from sleep's eternal stream,
Would we know sleep's guarded secret? Ere
the fire consume the brand,

Would it know if yet its ashes may requicken?
yet we deem
Surely man may know, or ever night unyoke
her starry team,
What the dawn shall be, or if the dawn shall
be not: yea, the scroll
Would we read of sleep's dark scripture,
pledge of peace or doom of dole.
Ah, but here man's heart leaps, yearning to-
ward the gloom with venturous glee,
Though his pilot eye behold nor bay nor har-
bor, rock nor shoal,
From the shore that hath no shore beyond it
set in all the sea.

Friend, who knows if death indeed have life
or life have death for goal?
Day nor night can tell us, nor may seas de-
clare nor skies unroll
What has been from everlasting, or if aught
shall always be.
Silence answering only strikes response re-
verberate on the soul
From the shore that hath no shore beyond it
set in all the sea.

A NEW-YEAR ODE.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

I.

TWICE twelve times have the springs of years
refilled
Their fountains from the river-head of
time
Since by the green sea's marge, ere autumn
chilled
Waters and woods with sense of changing
clime,
A great light rose upon my soul, and thrilled
My spirit of sense with sense of spheres in
chime,
Sound as of song wherewith a God would
build
Towers that no force of conquering war
might climb.
Wind shook the glimmering sea
Even as my soul in me
Was stirred with breath of mastery more
sublime,
Uplift and borne along
More thunderous tides of song,

Where wave rang back to wave more rapt-
urous rhyme
And world on world flashed lordlier
light
Than ever lit the wandering ways of ships by
night.

II.

The spirit of God, whose breath of life is
song,
Moved, though his word was human, on
the face
Of those deep waters of the soul, too long
Dumb, dark, and cold, that waited for the
grace
Wherewith day kindles heaven: and as some
throng
Of quiring wings fills full some lone chill
place
With sudden rush of life and joy, more strong
Than death or sorrow or all night's dark-
ling race,

So was my heart, that heard
All heaven in each deep word,
Filled full with light of thought, and waxed
apace

Itself more wide and deep,
To take that gift and keep
And cherish while my days fulfilled their
space;

A record wide as earth and sea,
The Legend writ of Ages past and yet to be.

III.

As high the chant of paradise and Hell
Rose, when the soul of Milton gave it wings;
As wide the sweep of Shakespeare's empire
fell,

When life had bared for him her secret
springs;
But not his various soul might range and dwell
Amid the mysteries of the founts of things;
Nor Milton's range of rule so far might swell
Across the kingdoms of forgotten kings

Men, centuries, nations, time,
Life, death, love, trust, and crime,
Rang record through the change of smitten
strings

That felt an exile's hand
Sound hope for every land
More loud than storm's cloud-sundering
trumpet rings,

And bid strong death for judgment rise,
And life bow down for judgment of his awless
eyes.

IV.

And death, soul-stricken in his strength re-
signed

The keeping of the sepulchres to song;
And life was humbled, and his height of mind
Brought lower than lies a grave-stone fallen
along;

And like a ghost and like a God mankind
Rose clad with light and darkness; weak
and strong,

Clean and unclean, with eyes afire and blind,
Wounded and whole, fast bound with cord
and thong,

Free; fair and foul, sin-stained,
And sinless; crowned and chained;
Fleet-limbed, and halting all his lifetime long;
Glad of deep shame, and sad

For shame's sake; wise, and mad;
Girt round with love and hate of right and
wrong;

Armed and disarmed for sleep and
strife;

Proud, and sore fear made havoc of his pride of
life.

V.

Shadows and shapes of fable and storied sooth
Rose glorious as with gleam of gold unpriced;
Eve, clothed with heavenly nakedness and
youth

That matched the morning's; Cain, self-
sacrificed

On crime's first altar: legends wise as truth,
And truth in legends deep embalmed and
spiced;

The stars that saw the starlike eyes of Ruth,
The grave that heard the clarion call of
Christ.

And higher than sorrow and mirth
The heavenly song of earth

Sprang, in such notes as might have well
sufficed

To still the storms of time
And sin's contentious clime

With peace renewed of life repara'dised:

Earth, scarred not yet with temporal
scars;
Goddess of gods, our mother, chosen among
the stars.

VI.

Earth fair as heaven, ere change and time set
odds

Between them, light and darkness know not
when.

And fear, grown strong through panic periods,
Crouched, a crowned worm, in faith's Ler-
nean fen,

And love lay bound, and hope was scourged
with rods,

And death cried out from desert and from
den,
Seeing all the heaven above him dark with
gods

And all the world about him marred of men.
Cities that nought might purge

Save the sea's whelming surge

From all the pent pollutions in their pen
Deep death drank down, and wrought
With wreck of all things, nought

That none might live of all their names
again,

Nor aught of all whose life is breath
Serve any God whose likeness was not like
to death.

VII.

Till by the lips and eyes of one live nation
 The blind mute world found grace to see
 and speak,
 And light watched rise a more divine creation
 At that more godlike utterance of the Greek,
 Let there be freedom. Kings whose orient
 station
 Made pale the morn, and all her presage
 bleak,
 Girt each with strengths of all his generation,
 Dim tribes of shamefaced soul and sun-swart
 cheek,
 Twice, urged with one desire,
 Son following hard on sire,
 With all the wrath of all a world to wreak,
 And all the rage of night
 Afire against the light
 Whose weakness makes her strong-winged
 empire weak,
 Stood up to unsay that saying, and fell
 Too far for song, though song were thousand-
 tongued, to tell.

VIII.

From those deep echoes of the loud Ægean
 That rolled response whereat false fear was
 chid
 By songs of joy sublime and Sophoclean,
 Fresh notes reverberate westward rose to bid
 All wearier times take comfort from the pæan
 That tells the night what deeds the sunrise
 did,
 Even till the lawns and torrents Pyrean
 Ring answer from the records of the Cid.
 But never force of fountains
 From sunniest hearts of mountains
 Wherein the soul of hidden June was hid
 Poured forth so pure and strong
 Springs of reiterate song,
 Loud as the streams his fame was reared
 amid,
 More sweet than flowers they feed,
 and fair
 With grace of lordlier sunshine and more
 lambent air.

IX.

A star more prosperous than the storm-clothed
 east's
 Clothed all the warm south-west with light
 like spring's
 When hands of strong men spread the wolves
 their feasts

And from snake-spirited princes plucked
 the stings;
 Ere earth, grown all one den of hurtling beasts,
 Had for her sunshine and her watersprings
 The fire of hell that warmed the hearts of
 priests,
 The wells of blood that slaked the lips of
 kings.
 The shadow of night made stone
 Stood populous and alone,
 Dense with its dead and loathed of living
 things
 That draw not life from death,
 And as with hell's own breath
 And clangor of immitigable wing
 Vexed the fair face of Paris, made
 Foul in its murderous imminence of sound and
 shade.

X.

And all these things were parcels of the vision
 That moved a cloud before his eyes, or
 stood
 A tower half shattered by the strong collision
 Of spirit and spirit, of evil gods with good ;
 A ruinous wall rent through with grim division,
 Where time had marked his every mon-
 strous mood
 Of scorn and strength and pride and self-
 derision :
 The Tower of Things, that felt upon it
 brood
 Night, and about it cast
 The storm of all the past
 Now mute and forceless as a fire subdued :
 Yet through the rifted years
 And centuries veiled with tears
 And ages as with very death imbrued
 Freedom, whence hope and faith
 grow strong,
 Smiles, and firm love sustains the indissoluble
 song.

XI.

Above the cloudy coil of days deceased,
 Its might of flight, with mists and storms
 beset,
 Burns heavenward, as with heart and hope
 increased,
 For all the change of tempests, all the fret
 Of frost or fire, keen fraud or force released,
 Wherewith the world once wasted knows
 not yet
 If evil or good lit all the darkling east
 From the ardent moon of sovereign Maho-
 met

Sublime in work and will
 The song sublimer still
 Salutes him, ere the splendor shrink and
 set ;
 Then with imperious eye
 And wing that sounds the sky
 Soars and sees risen as ghosts in concourse
 met
 The old world's seven elder wonders,
 firm
 As dust and fixed as shadows, weaker than
 the worm.

XII.

High witness borne of knights high-souled
 and hoary
 Before death's face and empire's rings and
 glows
 Even from the dust their life poured forth left
 gory,
 As the eagle's cry rings after from the snows
 Supreme rebuke of shame clothed round with
 glory
 And hosts whose track the false crowned
 eagle shows ;
 More loud than sounds through stormiest
 song and story
 The laugh of slayers whose names the sea-
 wind knows ;
 More loud than peals on land
 In many a red wet hand
 The clash of gold and cymbals as they close ;
 Loud as the blast that meets
 The might of marshalled fleets
 And sheds it into shipwreck, like a rose
 Blown from a child's light grasp in sign
 That earth's high lords are lords not over
 breeze and brine.

XIII.

Above the dust and mire of man's dejection
 The wide-winged spirit of song resurgent
 sees
 His wingless and long-laboring resurrection
 Up the arduous heaven, by sore and strange
 degrees,
 Mount, and with splendor of the soul's re-
 flection
 Strike heaven's dark sovereign down upon
 his knees,
 Pale in the light of orient insurrection,
 And dumb before the almightier lord's
 decrees
 Who bade him be of yore,
 Who bids him be no more ;

And all earth's heart is quickened as the
 sea's
 Even as when sunrise burns
 The very sea's heart years
 That heard not on the midnight-walking
 breeze
 The wail that woke with evensong
 From hearts of poor folk watching all the
 darkness long.

XIV.

Dawn and the beams of sunbright song illumine
 Love, with strange children at her piteous
 breast,
 By grace of weakness from the grave-mouthed
 gloom
 Plucked, and by mercy lulled to living rest,
 Soft as the nursling's nigh the grandsire's
 tomb
 That fell on sleep, a bird of rifled nest ;
 Soft as the lips whose smile unsaid the doom
 That gave their sire to violent death's arrest.
 Even for such love's sake strong,
 Wrath fires the inveterate song
 That bids hell gape for one whose bland
 mouth blest
 All slayers and liars that sighed
 Prayer as they slew and lied
 Till blood had clothed his priesthood as a
 vest,
 And hears, though darkness yet be
 dumb
 The silence of the trumpet of the wrath to
 come.

XV.

Nor lacked these lights of constellated age
 A star among them fed with life more dire,
 Lit with his bloodred fame whose withering
 rage
 Made earth for heaven's sake one funereal
 pyre
 And life in faith's name one appointed stage
 For death to purge the souls of men with
 fire,
 Heaven, earth, and hell on one thrice tragic
 page
 Mixed all their light and darkness: one
 man's lyre
 Gave all their echoes voice ;
 Bade rose-cheeked love rejoice,
 And cold-lipped craft with ravenous fear
 conspire,
 And fire-eyed faith smite hope
 Dead, seeing enthroned as Pope

And crowned of heaven on earth at hell's
desire

Sin, called by death's incestuous name
Borgia: the world that heard it flushed and
quailed with shame.

XVI.

Another year, and hope triumphant heard

The consummating sound of song that spake
Conclusion to the multitudinous word

Whose expectation held her spirit awake
Till full delight for twice twelve years deferred
Bade all souls entering eat and drink, and
take

A third time comfort given them, that the
third

Might heap the measure up of twain, and
make

The sinking year sublime

Among all sons of time

And fair in all men's memories for his sake.

Each thought of ours became

Fire, kindling from his fame,

And music winding in his wide song's wake.

Yea, and the world bore witness here

How great a light was risen upon this dark-
ening year.

XVII.

It was the dawn of winter: sword in sheath,
Change, veiled and mild, came down the
gradual air

With cold slow smiles that hid the doom
beneath.

Five days to die in yet were autumn's, ere
The last leaf withered from his flowerless
wreath.

South, east and north, our skies were all
blown bare,

But westward over glimmering holt and
heath

Cloud, wind, and light had made a heaven
more fair

Than ever dream or truth

Showed earth in time's keen youth

When men with angels communed unaware.

Above the sun's head, now

Veiled even to the ardent brow,

Rose two sheer wings of sundering cloud,
that were

As a bird's poised for vehement flight,

Full-fledged with plumes of tawny fire and
hoar gray light.

XVIII.

As midnight black, as twilight brown, they
spread,

But feathered thick with flame that streak-
ed and lined

Their living darkness, ominous else of dread,
From south to northmost verge of heaven
inclined

Most like some giant angel's, whose bent head
Bowed earthward, as with message for
mankind

Of doom or benediction to be shed
From passage of his presence. Far be-
hind,

Even while thy seemed to close,

Stoop, and take flight, arose

Above them, higher than heavenliest thought
may find

In light or night supreme

Of vision or of dream,

Immeasurable of men's eyes or mounting
mind,

Heaven, manifest in manifold

Light of pure pallid amber, cheered with fire
of gold.

XIX.

And where the fine gold faded all the sky
Shone green as the outer sea when April
glows,

Inlaid with flakes and feathers fledged to
fly

Of cloud suspense in rapture and repose,
With large live petals, broad as love bids lie
Full open when the sun salutes the rose,

And small rent sprays where with the heavens
most high

Were strewn as autumn strews the garden-
close

With ruinous roseleaves whirled

About their wan chill world,

Through wind-worn bowers that now no
music knows,

Spoil of the dim dusk year

Whose utter night is near,

And near the flower of dawn beyond its
blows;

Till east and west were fire and light,

As though the dawn to come had flushed the
coming night.

XX.

The highways paced of men that toil or play,
The byways known of none but lonely feet,
Were paven of purple woven of night and
day

With hands that met as hands of friends
might meet—

As though night's were not lifted up to slay
And day's had waxed not weaker, Peace
more sweet

Than music, light more soft than shadow, lay
On downs and moorlands wan with day's
defeat.

That watched afar above
Life's very rose of love
Let all its lustrous leaves fall, fade, and
fleet,

And fill all heaven and earth
Full as with fires of birth
Whence time should feed his years with
light and heat:

Nay, not life's, but a flower more strong
Than life or time or death, love's very rose
of song.

XXI.

Song visible, whence all men's eyes were lit
With love and loving wonder: song that
glowed

Through cloud and change on souls that knew
not it

And hearts that wist not whence their com-
fort flowed,

Whence fear was lightened of her fever-fit,
Whence anguish of her life-compelling load.

Yea, no man's head whereon the fire alit,
Of all that passed along that sunset road

Westward, no brow so drear,
No eye so dull of cheer,

No face so mean whereon that light abode,
But as with alien pride

Strange godhead glorified
Each feature flushed from heaven with fire
that showed

The likeness of its own life wrought
By strong transfiguration as of living thought.

XXII.

Nor only clouds of the everlasting sky,

Nor only men that paced that sunward way
To the utter bourne of evening, passed not by
Unblest or unilluminated; none might say,

Of all things visible in the wide world's eye,
That all too low for all that grace it lay:

The lowliest lakelets of the moorland nigh,
The narrowest pools where shallowest wave-
lets play,

Were filled from heaven above
With light like fire of love,
With flames and colors like a dawn in May,

As hearts that lowlier live
With light of thoughts that give
Light from the depth of souls more deep
than they

Through song's or story's kindling
scroll,
The splendor of the shadow that reveals the
soul.

XXIII.

For, when such light is in the world, we share,
All of us, all the rays thereof that shine:

Its presence is alive in the unseen air,
Its fire within our veins as quickening wine;

A spirit is shed on all men everywhere,
Known or not known of all men for divine.

Yea, as the sun makes heaven, that light
makes fair

All souls of ours, all lesser souls than thine,
Priest, prophet, seer and sage,

Lord of a subject age
That bears thy seal upon it for a sign;

Whose name shall be thy name,
Whose light thy light of fame,

The light of love that makes thy soul a
shrine;

Whose record through all years to be
Shall bear this witness written—that its womb
bare thee.

XXIV.

O mystery, whence to one man's hand was
given

Power upon all things of the spirit, and
might

Whereby the veil of all the years was riven
And naked stood the secret soul of night!

O marvel, hailed of eyes whence cloud is
driven,

That shows at last wrong reconciled with
right

By death divine of evil and sin forgiven!
O light of song, whose fire is perfect light!

No speech, no voice, no thought,
No love, avails us aught

For service of thanksgiving in his sight
Who hath given us all for ever

Such gifts that man gave never
So many and great since first Time's wings
took flight.

Man may not praise a spirit above
Man's: life and death shall praise him: we
can only love.

XXV.

Life, everlasting while the worlds endure,
Death, self-abased before a power more
high,

Shall bear one witness, and their word stand
 sure,
 That not till time be dead shall this man die.
 Love, like a bird, comes loyal to his lure;
 Fame flies before him, wingless else to fly.
 A child's heart toward his kind is not more
 pure,
 An eagle's toward the sun no lordlier eye.
 Awe sweet as love and proud
 As fame, though hushed and bowed
 Yearns toward him silent as his face goes
 by:
 All crowns before his crown
 Triumphantly bow down,
 For pride that one more great than all
 draws nigh:
 All souls applaud, all hearts acclaim,
 One heart benign, one soul supreme, one con-
 quering name.

NOTES.

- ST. V.
 V. 3. La Légende des Siècles: Le Sacre
 de la Femme.
 4. La Conscience.
 7. Booz endormi.
 8. Première rencontre du Christ avec
 le tombeau.
 9. La Terre: Hymne.

- ST. V.
 VI. 3. Les Temps Paniques.
 9. La Ville Disparue.
 VII. Les Trois Cents.
 VIII. 1. Le Détroit de l'Europe: La Chan-
 son de Sophocle à Salamine.
 7. Le Romancero du Cid.
 IX. 3. Le Petit Roi de Galice.
 5. Le Jour des Rois.
 9. Montfaucon.
 X. La vision d'où est sorti ce livre.
 XI. 9. L'an neuf de l'Hégire.
 12. Les sept merveilles du monde.
 XII. 1. Les quatre jours d'Elciis.
 4. Le Régiment du baron Madruce.
 7. La Chanson des Aventuriers de
 la Mer.
 9. Les Reîtres.
 12. La Rose de l'Infante.
 XIII. 1. Le Satyre.
 12. Les paysans au bord de la mer.
 XIV. 1. Les pauvres gens.
 5. Petit Paul.
 7. Guerre Civile.
 9. La Vision de Dante.
 15. La Trompette du Jugement.
 XV. Torquemada (1882).
 XVI. La Légende des Siècles: tome
 cinquième et dernier (1883).
 XVII. November 25, 1883.

LINES ON THE MONUMENT OF GIUSEPPE MAZZINI.

ITALIA, mother of the souls of men,
 Mother divine,
 Of all that served thee best with sword or
 pen,
 All sons of thine,
 Thou knowest that here the likeness of the
 best.
 Before thee stands;
 The head most high, the heart found faith-
 fullest,
 The purest hands.
 Above the fume and foam of time that flits,
 The soul, we know,
 Now sits on high where Alighieri sits
 With Angelo.

Not his own heavenly tongue hath heavenly
 speech
 Enough to say
 What this man was, whose praise no thought
 may reach,
 No words can weigh.
 Since man's first mother brought to mortal
 birth
 Her first-born son,
 Such grace befell not ever man on earth
 As crowns this one.
 Of God nor man was ever this thing said,
 That he could give
 Life back to her who gave him, whence his
 dead mother might live.

But this man found his mother dead and slain,

With fast sealed eyes,
And bade the dead rise up and live again,
And she did rise.

And all the world was bright with her through him:

But dark with strife,
Like heaven's own sun that storming clouds bedim,
Was all his life.

Life and the clouds are vanished: hate and fear

Have had their span
Of time to hurt, and are not: he is here,
The sunlike man.

City superb that hadst Columbus first

For sovereign son,
Be prouder that thy breast hath later nurst
This mightier one.

Glory be his forever, while his land

Lives and is free,
As with controlling breath and sovereign hand
He bade her be.

Earth shows to heaven the names by thousands told

That crown her fame,
But highest of all that heaven and earth behold
Mazzini's name.

LES CASQUETS.

FROM the depth of the waters that lighten and darken

With change everlasting of life and of death,
Where hardly by noon if the lulled ear hearken

It hears the sea's as a tired child's breath,
Where hardly by night if an eye dare scan it
The storm lets shipwreck be seen or heard,
As the reefs to the waves and the foam to the granite

Respond one merciless word,
Sheer seen and far, in the sea's live heaven,
A seamew's flight from the wild sweet land,
White-plumed with foam if the wind wake,
seven

Black helms as of warriors that stir not stand.

From the depths that abide and the waves that environ

Seven rocks rear heads that the midnight masks;

And the strokes of the swords of the storm are as iron

On the steel of the wave-worn casques.

Be night's dark word as the word of a wizard,

Be the word of dawn as a god's glad word,
Like heads of the spirits of darkness visored

That see not forever, nor ever have heard,
These basnets, plumed as for fight or plumeless,

Crowned of the storm and by storm dis-crowned,

Keep ward of the lists where the dead lie tombless

And the tale of them is not found.

Nor eye may number nor hand may reckon

The tithes that are taken of life by the dark,
Or the ways of the path, if doom's hand beckon,

For the soul to fare as a helmless bark—
Fare forth on a way that no sign showeth,
Nor aught of its goal or of aught between;
A path for her flight which no fowl knoweth,
Which the vulture's eye hath not seen.

Here still, though the wave and the wind seem lovers

Lulled half asleep by their own soft words,
A dream as of death in the sun's light hovers,
And a sign in the motions and cries of the birds.

Dark auguries and keen from the sweet sea-swallows

Strike noon with a sense as of midnight's breath,

And the wing that flees and the wing that follows

Are as types of the wings of death.

For here, when the night roars round, and under

The white sea lightens and leaps like fire,
Acclaimed of storm and applauded in thunder,
Sits death on the throne of his crowned desire.

Yea, hardly the hand of the god might fashion
A seat more strong for his strength to take,

For the might of his heart and the pride of his passion

To rejoice in the wars they make.

When the heart in him brightens with blitheness of battle
 And the depth of its thirst is fulfilled with strife,
 And his ear with the ravage of bolts that rattle,
 And the soul of death with the pride of life,
 Till the darkness is loud with his dark thanksgiving
 And wind and cloud are as chords of his hymn,
 There is nought save death in the deep night living
 And the whole night worships him.

Heaven's height bows down to him, signed with his token,
 And the sea's depth, moved as a heart that yearns,
 Heaves up to him, strong as a heart half broken,
 A heart that breaks in a prayer that burns.
 Of cloud is the shrine of his worship moulded,
 But the altar therein is of sea-shaped stone,
 Whereon, with the strength of his wide wings folded,
 Sits death in the dark, alone.

He hears the word of his servant spoken,
 The word that the wind his servant saith ;
 Storm writes on the front of the night his token,
 That the skies may seem to bow down to death.
 But the clouds that stoop and the storms that minister
 Serve but as thralls that fulfil their tasks ;
 And his seal is not set save here on the sinister
 Crests reared of the crownless casques.

Nor flame nor plume of the storm that crowned them
 Gilds or quickens their stark black strength.
 Life lightens and murmurs and laughs right round them,
 At peace with the noon's whole breadth and length,
 At one with the heart of the soft-souled heaven,
 At one with the life of the kind wild land :
 But its touch may unbrace not the strengths of the seven
 Casques hewn of the storm-wind's hand.

No touch may loosen the black braced helmet's

For the wild elves' heads of the wild waves wrought.
 As flowers on the sea are her small green realmlets,
 Like heavens made out of a child's heart's thought ;
 But these as thorns of her desolate places,
 Strong fangs that fasten and hold lives fast :
 And the vizors are framed as for formless faces

That a dark dream sees go past.

Of fear and of fate are the frontlets fashioned,
 And the heads behind them are dire and dumb.

When the heart of the darkness is scarce impassioned,
 Thrilled scarce with sense of the wrath to come,
 They bear the sign from of old engraven,
 Though peace be round them and strife seem far,
 That here is none but the night-wind's haven,
 With death for the harbor bar.

Of the iron of doom are the casquets carven,
 That never the rivets thereof should burst.
 When the heart of the darkness is hunger-starven,
 And the throats of the gulfs are agape for thirst,
 And stars are as flowers that the wind bids wither,
 And dawn is as hope struck dead by fear,
 The rage of the ravenous night sets hither,
 And the crown of her work is here.

All shores about and afar lie lonely,
 But lonelier are these than the heart of grief,
 These loose-linked rivets of rock, whence only
 Strange life scarce gleams from the sheer main reef,
 With a blind wan face in the wild wan morning.
 With a live lit flame on its brows by night,
 That the lost may lose not its word's mute warning
 And the blind by its grace have sight.

Here, walled in with the wide waste water,
 Grew the grace of a girl's lone life,
 The sea's and the sea-wind's foster-daughter,
 And peace was hers in the main mid strife.
 For her were the rocks clothed round with thunder,

And the crests of them carved by the storm-smith's craft:
For her was the mid storm rent in sunder
As with passion that wailed and laughed.

For her the sunrise kindled and scattered
The red rose-leaflets of countless cloud:
For her the blasts of the springtide shattered
The strengths reluctant of waves back-bowed.

For her would winds in the mid sky levy
Bright wars that hardly the night bade
cease:

At noon, when sleep on the sea lies heavy,
For her would the sun make peace.

Peace rose crowned with the dawn on golden
Lit leagues of triumph that flamed and
smiled:

Peace lay lulled in the moon-beholden
Warm darkness making the world's heart
mild.

For all the wide waves' troubles and treasons,
One word only her soul's ear heard
Speak from stormless and storm-rent seasons,
And ought save peace was the word.

All her life waxed large with the light of it,
All her heart fed full on the sound:
Spirit and sense were exalted in sight of it,
Compassed and girdled and clothed with
it round.

Sense was none but a strong still rapture,
Spirit was none but a joy sublime,
Of strength to curb and of craft to capture
The craft and the strength of Time.

Time lay bound as in painless prison
There, close in with a strait small space.
Never thereon as a strange light risen
Change had unveiled for her grief's far
face.

Three white walls flung out from the base-
ment

Girt the width of the world whereon
Gazing at night from her flame-lit casement
She saw where the dark sea shone.

Hardly the breadth of a few brief paces,
Hardly the length of a strong man's stride,
The small court flower-lit with children's
faces

Scarce held scope for a bird to hide.
Yet here was a man's brood reared and hidden
Between the rocks and the towers and the
foam

Where peril and pity and peace were bidden
As guests to the same sure home.

Here would pity keep watch for peril,
And surety comfort his heart with peace.
No flower save one, where the reefs lie sterile,
Gave of the seed of its heart's increase.
Pity and surety and peace most lowly
Were the root and the stem and the bloom
of the flower:
And the light and the breath of the buds
kept holy
That maid's else blossomless bower.

With never a leaf but the seaweed's tangle,
Never a bird's but the seamew's note,
It heard all round it the strong storms wran-
gle,

Watched far past it the waste wrecks float.
But her soul was stilled by the sky's endur-
ance,

And her heart made glad with the sea's
content;
And her faith waxed more in the sun's assur-
ance

For the winds that came and went.

Sweetness was brought for her forth of the
bitter

Sea's strength, and light of the deep sea's
dark,

From where green lawns on Alderney glitter
To the bastioned crags of the steeps of
Sark.

These she knew from afar beholden,
And marvelled haply what life would be
On moors that sunset and dawn leave golden,
In dells that smile on the sea.

And forth she fared as a stout-souled rover,
For a brief blithe raid on the bounding
brine:

And light winds ferried her light bark over
To the lone soft island of fair-limbed kine.
But the league-long length of its wild green
border,

And the small bright streets of serene St.
Anne,

Perplexed her sense with a strange disorder
At sight of the works of man.

The world was here, and the world's confu-
sion,
And the dust of the wheels of revolving
life,

Pain, labor, change, and the fierce illusion
Of strife more vain than the sea's old strife.
And her heart within her was vexed, and
dizzy

The sense of her soul as a wheel that
whirled:

She might not endure for a space that busy
Loud coil of the troublous world.

Too full, she said, was the world of trouble,
Too dense with noise of contentious things,
And shews less bright than the blithe foam's
bubble.

As home she fared on the smooth wind's
wings.

For joy grows loftier in air more lonely,
Where only the sea's brood fain would be;
Where only the heart may receive in it only
The love of the heart of the sea.

A BALLAD OF SARK.

HIGH beyond the granite portal arched across
Like the gateway of some godlike giant's
hold

Sweep and swell the billowy breasts of moor
and moss

East and westward, and the dell their slopes
enfold

Basks in purple, glows in green, exults in
gold.

Glens that know the dove and fells that hear
the lark

Fill with joy the rapturous island, as an ark
Full of spicery wrought from herb and
flower and tree.

None would dream that grief even here may
disembark

On the wrathful woful marge of earth and
sea.

Rocks emblazoned like the mid shield's royal
boss

Take the sun with all their blossom broad
and bold.

None would dream that all this moorland's
glow and gloss

Could be dark as tombs that strike the
spirit acold

Even in eyes that opened here, and here
behold

Now no sun relume from hope's belated
spark

Any comfort, nor may ears of mourners hark
Though the ripe woods ring with golden-
throated glee,

While the soul lies shattered, like a stranded
bark

On the wrathful woful marge of earth and
sea.

Death and doom are they whose crested tri-
umphs toss

On the proud plumed waves whence mourn-
ing notes are tolled.

Wail of perfect woe and moan for utter loss
Raise the bride-song through the graveyard
on the wold

Where the bride-bed keeps the bridegroom
fast in mould.

Where the bride, with death for priest and
doom for clerk,

Hears for choir the throats of waves like
wolves that bark,

Sore anhungered, off the drear Eperquerie,
Fain to spoil the strongholds of the strength
of Sark

On the wrathful woful marge of earth and
sea.

Prince of storm and tempest, lord whose
ways are dark,

Wind whose wings are spread for flight that
none may mark,

Lightly dies the joy that lives by grace of
thee.

Love through thee lies bleeding, hope lies
cold and stark,

On the wrathful woful marge of earth and
sea.

NINE YEARS OLD.

FEBRUARY 4, 1883.

I.

LORD of light, whose shrine no hands destroy,
God of song, whose hymn no tongue

refuses,

Now, though spring far hence be cold and coy,

Bid the golden mouths of all the Muses

Ring forth gold of strains without alloy,

Till the ninefold rapture that suffuses

Heaven with song bid earth exult for joy,

Since the child whose head this dawn
bedews is

Sweet as once thy violet-cradled boy.

II.

Even as he lay lapped about with flowers,
Lies the life now nine years old before us

Lapped about with love in all its hours;

Hailed of many loves that chant in chorus

Loud or low from lush or leafless bowers,

Some from hearts exultant born sonorous,

Some scarce louder-voiced than soft-tongued
showers

Two months hence, when spring's light
wings poised o'er us
High shall hover, and her heart be ours.

III.

Even as he, though man-forsaken, smiled
On the soft kind snakes divinely bidden
There to feed him in the green mid-wild
Full with hurtless honey, till the hidden
Birth should prosper, finding fate more mild,
So full-fed with pleasures unforbidden.
So by love's lures blamelessly beguiled,
Laughs the nursing of our hearts un-
chidden
Yet by change that mars not yet the child.

IV.

Ah, not yet! Thou, lord of night and day,
Time, sweet father of such blameless
pleasure,
Time, false friend who tak'st thy gifts away,
Spare us yet some scantlings of the treasure,
Leave us yet some rapture of delay,
Yet some bliss of blind and fearless leisure
Unprophetic of delight's decay,
Yet some nights and days wherein to meas-
ure
All the joys that bless us while they may.

V.

Not the waste Arcadian woodland, wet
Still with dawn and vocal with Alpheus,
Reared a nursing worthier love's regret,
Lord, than this, whose eyes beholden free
us
Straight from bonds the soul would fain forget,
Fain cast off, that night and day might see
us
Clear once more of life's vain fume and fret:
Leave us, then, whate'er thy doom decree
us,
Yet some days wherein to love him yet.

VI.

Yet some days, wherein the child is ours,
Ours, not thine, O lord whose hand is o'er
us
Always, as the sky with suns and showers
Dense and radiant, soundless or sonorous;
Yet some days for love's sake, ere the bowers
Fade wherein his fair first years kept chorus
Night and day with Graces robed like hours,
Ere this worshipped childhood wane be-
fore us,
Change, and bring forth fruit—but no more
flowers.

VII.

Love we may the thing that is to be,
Love we must: but how forego this olden
Joy, this flower of childish love, that we
Held more dear than aught of Time is
holden—
Time, whose laugh is like as Death's to see—
Time, who heeds not aught of all beholden,
Heard, or touched in passing—flower or tree,
Tares or grain of leaden days or golden—
More than wind has heed of ships at sea?

VIII.

First the babe, a very rose of joy,
Sweet as hope's first note of jubilation,
Passes: then must growth and change
destroy
Next the child, and mar the consecration
Hallowing yet, ere thought or sense annoy,
Childhood's yet half heavenlike habitation,
Bright as truth and frailer than a toy;
Whence its guest with eager gratulation
Springs, and life grows larger round the boy.

IX.

Yet, ere sunrise wholly cease to shine,
Ere change come to chide our hearts, and
scatter
Memories marked for love's sake with a sign,
Let the light of dawn beholden flatter
Yet some while our eyes that feed on thine,
Child, with love that change not time can
shatter,
Love, whose silent song says more than mine
Now, though charged with elder loves and
latter
Here it hails a lord whose years are nine.

AFTER A READING.

FOR the seven times seventh time love would
renew the delight without end or alloy
That it takes in the praise as it takes in the
presence of eyes that fulfil it with joy;
But how shall it praise them and rest un-
bucked by the presence and pride of the
boy?

Praise meet for a child is unmeet for an elder
whose winters and springs are nine:
What song may have strength in its wings to
expand them, or light in its eyes to shine,
That shall seem not as weakness and darkness
if matched with the theme I would fain
make mine?

The round little flower of a face that exults in
the sunshine of shadowless days
Defies the delight it enkindles to sing of it
aught not unfit for the praise
Of the sweetest of all things that eyes may re-
joice in and tremble with love as they gaze.

Such tricks and such meanings abound on the
lips and the brows that are brighter than
light,
The demure little chin, the sedate little nose,
and the forehead of sun-stained white,
That love overflows into laughter and laughter
subsides into love at the sight.

Each limb and each feature has action in tune
with the meaning that smiles as its speaks
From the fervor of eyes and the fluttering
of hands in a foretaste of fancies and
freaks,
When the thought of them deepens the dimples
that laugh in the corners and curves of his
cheeks.

As a bird when the music within her is yet too
intense to be spoken in song,
That pauses a little for pleasure to feel how
the notes from withinwards throng,
So pauses the laugh at his lips for a little, and
waxes within more strong.

As the music elate and triumphal that bids
all things of the dawn bear part
With the tune that prevails when her passion
has risen into rapture of passionate art.
So lightens the laughter made perfect that
leaps from its nest in the heaven of his
heart.

Deep, grave and sedate is the gaze of expect-
ant intensity bent for a while.
And absorbed on its aim as the tale that en-
thralls him uncovers the web of its wile,
Till the goal of attention is touched, and
expectancy kisses delight in a smile.

And it seems to us here that in Paradise hardly
the spirit of Lamb or of Blake
May hear or behold aught sweeter than
lightens and rings when his bright thoughts
break

In laughter that well might lure them to look,
and to smile as of old for his sake.

O singers that best loved children, and best
for their sakes are beloved of us here,

In the world of your life everlasting, where
love has no thorn and desire has no fear,
All else may be sweeter than aught is on
earth, nought dearer than these are dear.

MAYTIME IN MIDWINTER.

A NEW year gleams on us, tearful
And troubled and smiling dim
As the smile on a lip still fearful,
As glances of eyes that swim:
But the bird of my heart makes cheerful
The days that are bright for him.

Child, how may a man's love merit
The grace you shed as you stand,
The gift that is yours to inherit?
Through you are the bleak days bland;
Your voice is a light to my spirit;
You bring the sun in your hand.

The year's wing shows not a feather
As yet of the plumes to be;
Yet here in the shrill gray weather
The spring's self stands at my knee,
And laughs as we commune together,
And lightens the world we see.

The rains are as dews for the christening
Of dawns that the nights benumb:
The spring's voice answers me listening
For speech of a child to come,
While promise of music is glistening
On lips that delight keeps dumb.

The mists and the storms receding
At sight of you smile and die:
Your eyes held wide on me reading
Shed summer across the sky:
Your heart shines clear for me, heeding
No more of the world than I.

The world, what is it to you, dear,
And me, if its face be gray,
And the new-born year be a shrewd year
For flowers that the fierce winds fray?
You smile, and the sky seems blue, dear;
You laugh, and the month turns May.

Love cares not for care, he has daffed her
Aside as a mate for guile:
The sight that my soul yearns after
Feeds full my sense for awhile;
Your sweet little sun-faced laughter,
Your good little glad grave smile.

Your hands through the bookshelves flutter ;
 Scott, Shakespeare, Dickens, are caught ;
 Blake's visions, that lighten and mutter ;
 Molière—and his smile has nought
 Left on it of sorrow, to utter
 The secret things of his thought.

No grim thing written or graven
 But grows, if you gaze on it, bright ;
 A lark's note rings from the raven,
 And tragedy's robe turns white ;
 And shipwrecks drift into haven ;
 And darkness laughs, and is light.

Grief seems but a vision of madness ;
 Life's key-note peals from above
 With nought in it more of sadness
 Than broods on the heart of a dove :
 At sight of you, thought grows gladness,
 And life, through love of you, love.

A DOUBLE BALLAD OF AUGUST.

(1884.)

ALL Afric, winged with death and fire,
 Pants in our pleasant English air.
 Each blade of grass is tense as wire,
 And all the wood's loose trembling hair
 Stark in the broad and breathless glare
 Of hours whose touch wastes herb and tree.
 This bright sharp death shines everywhere ;
 Life yearns for solace toward the sea.

Earth seems a corpse upon the pyre ;
 The sun, a scourge for slaves to bear.
 All power to fear, all keen desire,
 Lies dead as dreams of days that were
 Before the new-born world lay bare
 In heaven's wide eye, whereunder we
 Lie breathless till the season spare :
 Life yearns for solace toward the sea.

Fierce hours, with ravening fangs that tire
 On spirit and sense, divide and share
 The throbs of thoughts that scarce respire,
 The throes of dreams that scarce forbear
 One mute immitigable prayer
 For cold perpetual sleep to be
 Shed snowlike on the sense of care.
 Life yearns for solace toward the sea.

The dust of ways where men suspire
 Seems even the dust of death's dim lair.
 But though the feverish days be dire
 The sea-wind rears and cheers its fair

Blithe broods of babes that here and there
 Make the sands laugh and glow for glee
 With gladder flowers than gardens wear.
 Life yearns for solace toward the sea.

The music dies not off the lyre
 That lets no soul alive despair.
 Sleep strikes not dumb the breathless choir
 Of waves whose note bids sorrow spare.
 As glad they sound, as fast they fare,
 As when fate's word first set them free
 And gave them light and night to wear.
 Life yearns for solace toward the sea.

For there, though night and day conspire
 To compass round with toil and snare
 And changeless whirl of change, whose gyre
 Draws all things deathwards unaware,
 The spirit of life they scourge and scare,
 Wild waves that follow on waves that flee
 Laugh, knowing that yet, though earth despair
 Life yearns for solace toward the sea.

HEARTSEASE COUNTRY.

TO ISABEL SWINBURNE.

THE far green westward heavens are bland,
 The far green Wiltshire downs are clear
 As these deep meadows hard at hand :
 The sight knows hardly far from near,
 Nor morning joy from evening cheer.
 In cottage garden-plots their bees
 Find many a fervent flower to seize
 And strain and drain the heart away
 From ripe sweet-williams and sweet-peas
 At every turn on every way.

But gladliest seems one flower to expand
 Its whole sweet heart all round us here ;
 'Tis Heartsease Country, Pansy Land.
 Nor sounds nor savors harsh and drear
 Where engines yell and halt and veer
 Can vex the sense of him who sees
 One flower-plot midway, that for trees
 Has poles, and sheds all grimed or gray
 For bowers like those that take the breeze
 At every turn on every way.

Content even there they smile and stand,
 Sweet thought's heart-easing flowers, nor
 fear,
 With reek and roaring steam though fanned,
 Nor shrink nor perish as they peer.
 The heart's eye holds not those more dear

That glow between the lanes and leas
Where'er the homeliest hand may please
To bid them blossom as they may
Where light approves and wind agrees
At every turn on every way.

Sister, the word of winds and seas
Endures not as the word of these
Your wayside flowers whose breath would
say
How hearts that love may find heart's ease
At every turn on every way.

A BALLAD OF APPEAL.

TO CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

SONG wakes with every wakening year
From hearts of birds that only feel
Brief spring's deciduous flower-time near:
And song more strong to help or heal
Shall silence worse than winter seal?
From love-lit thought's remurmuring cave
The notes that rippled, wave on wave,
Were clear as love, as faith were strong;
And all souls blessed the soul that gave
Sweet water from the well of song.

All hearts bore fruit of joy to hear,
All eyes felt mist upon them steal
For joy's sake, trembling toward a tear,
When, loud as marriage-bells that peal,
Or flutelike soft, or keen like steel,
Sprang the sheer music; sharp or grave,
We heard the drift of winds that drave,
And saw, swept round by ghosts in throng,
Dark rocks, that yielded, where they clave,
Sweet water from the well of song.

Blithe verse made all the dim sense clear
That smiles of babbling babes conceal:
Prayer's perfect heart spake here: and here
Rose notes of blameless woe and weal,
More soft than this poor song's appeal.
Where orchards bask, where cornfields wave,
They dropped like rains that cleanse and lave,
And scattered all the year along,
Like dewfall on an April grave,
Sweet water from the well of song.

Ballad, go bear our prayer, and crave
Pardon, because thy lowlier stave
Can do this plea no right, but wrong.
Ask nought beside thy pardon, save
Sweet water from the well of song.

CRADLE SONGS.

(TO A TUNE OF BLAKE'S.)

I.

BABY, baby bright,
Sleep can steal from sight
Little of your light:

Soft as fire in dew,
Still the life in you
Lights your slumber through.

Four white eyelids keep
Fast the seal of sleep
Deep as love is deep:

Yet, though closed it lies,
Love behind them spies
Heaven in two blue eyes.

II.

Baby, baby dear,
Earth and heaven are near
Now, for heaven is here.

Heaven is every place
Where your flower-sweet face
Fills our eyes with grace.

Till your own eyes deign
Earth a glance again,
Earth and heaven are twain.

Now your sleep is done,
Shine, and show the sun
Earth and heaven are one.

III.

Baby, baby sweet,
Love's own lips are meet
Scarce to kiss your feet.

Hardly love's own ear,
When your laugh crows clear,
Quite deserves to hear.

Hardly love's own wile,
Though it please awhile,
Quite deserves your smile.

Baby full of grace,
Bless us yet a space:
Sleep will come apace.

IV.

Baby, baby true,
Man, whate'er he do,
May deceive not you.

Smiles whose love is guile,
Worn a flattering while,
Win from you no smile.

One, the smile alone
Out of love's heart grown,
Ever wins your own.

Man, a dunce uncouth,
Errs in age and youth:
Babies know the truth.

V.

Baby, baby fair,
Love is fain to dare
Bless your haughtiest air.

Baby blithe and bland,
Reach but forth a hand
None may dare withstand;

Love, though wellnigh cowed,
Yet would praise aloud
Pride so sweetly proud.

Not the fitting word
Even from breeze or bird
Never yet was heard.

VI.

Baby, baby kind,
Though no word we find
Bear us yet in mind.

Half a little hour,
Baby bright in bower,
Keep this thought aflower—

Love it is, I see,
Here with heart and knee
Bows and worships me.

What can baby do,
Then, for love so true?—
Let it worship you.

VII.

Baby, baby wise,
Love's divine surmise
Lights your constant eyes.

Day and night and day
One mute word would they,
As the soul saith, say.

Trouble comes and goes;
Wonder ebbs and flows;
Love remains and glows.

As the fledgeling dove
Feels the breast above.
So your heart feels love.

PELAGIUS.

I.

THE sea shall praise him and the shores
bear part
That reared him when the bright south
world was black
With fume of creeds more foul than hell's
own rack,
Still darkening more love's face with loveless
art
Since Paul, faith's fervent Antichrist, of
heart
Heroic, haled the world vehemently back
From Christ's pure path on dire Jehovah's
track,
And said to dark Elisha's Lord, 'Thou art.'
But one whose soul had put the raiment on
Of love that Jesus left with James and John
Withstood that Lord whose seals of love
were lies,
Seeing what we see—how, touched by Truth's
bright rod,
The fiend whom Jews and Africans called
God
Feels his own hell take hold on him and
dies.

II.

The world has no such flower in any land,
And no such pearl in any gulf the sea,
As any babe on any mother's knee.
But all things blessed of men by saints are
banned:
God gives them grace to read and understand
The palimpsest of evil, writ where we,
Poor fools and lovers but of love, can see
Nought save a blessing signed by Love's own
hand.
The smile that opens heaven on us for them
Hath sin's transmitted birthmark hid there—
in:

The kiss it craves calls down from heaven
a rod.
If innocence be sin that Gods condemn,
Praise we the men who so being born in sin
First dared the doom and broke the
bonds of God.

III.

Man's heel is on the Almighty's neck who
said,
Let there be hell, and there was hell—on
earth.
But not for that may men forget their
worth—
Nay, but much more remember them—who
led
The living first from dwellings of the dead,
And rent the cercloths that were wont to
engirth
Souls wrapped and swathed and swaddled
from their birth
With lies that bound them fast from heel to
head.
Among the tombs when wise men all their
lives
Dwelt, and cried out, and cut themselves
with knives,
These men, being foolish, and of saints ab-
horred,
Beheld in heaven the sun by saints reviled,
Love, and on earth one everlasting Lord
In every likeness of a little child.

LOUIS BLANC.

THREE SONNETS TO HIS MEMORY.

I.

THE stainless soul that smiled through glori-
ous eyes;
The bright grave brow whereon dark for-
tune's blast
Might blow, but might not bend it, nor
o'erblast,
Save for one fierce fleet hour of shame, the
skies
Thrilled with warm dreams of worthier days
to rise
And end the whole world's winter; here at
last,
If death be death, have passed into the
past;
If death be life, live, though their semblance
dies.

Hope and high faith inviolate of distrust
Shone strong as life inviolate of the grave
Through each bright word and lineament
serene.
Most loving righteousness and love most just
Crowned, as day crowns the dawn-en-
kindled wave,
With visible aureole thine unfaltering
mien.

II.

Strong time and fire-swift change, with light-
nings clad
And shod with thunders of reverberate
years,
Have filled with light and sound of hopes
and fears
The space of many a season, since I had
Grace of good hap to make my spirit glad,
Once communing with thine: and memory
hears
The bright voice yet that then rejoiced
mine ears,
Sees yet the light of eyes that spake, and
bade
Fear not, but hope, though then time's heart
were weak
And heaven by hell shade-stricken, and the
range
Of high-born hope made questionable and
strange
As twilight trembling till the sunlight speak.
Thou sawest the sunrise and the storm in
one
Break: seest thou now the storm-compell-
ing sun?

III.

Surely thou seest, O spirit of light and fire,
Surely thou canst not choose, O soul, but
see
The days whose dayspring was beheld of
thee
Ere eyes less pure might have their hope's de-
sire,
Beholding life in heaven again respire
Where men saw nought that was or was to
be,
Save only death imperial. Thou and he
Who has the heart of all men's hearts for
lyre,
Ye twain, being great of spirit as time is
great,
And sure of sight as truth's own heaven-
ward eye,

Beheld the forms of forces passing by
And certitude of equal-balanced fate,
Whose breath forefelt makes darkness pal-
pitate,
And knew that light should live and darkness
die.

VOS DEOS LAUDAMUS :

THE CONSERVATIVE JOURNALIST'S ANTHEM.

'As a matter of fact, no man living, or who ever lived
—not CÆSAR or PERICLES, not SHAKESPEARE or
MICHAEL ANGELO—could confer honor more than he
took on entering the House of Lords.'—*Saturday Re-
view*, December 15, 1883.

'Clumsy and shallow snobbery—can do no hurt.'—*Ibid.*

I.

O LORDS our Gods, beneficent, sublime,
In the evening, and before the morning
flames,
We praise, we bless, we magnify your
names.
The slave is he that serves not, his the crime
And shame, who hails not as the crown of
Time
That House wherein the all-envious world
acclaims
Such glory that the reflex of it shames
All crowns bestowed of men for prose or
rhyme.
The serf, the cur, the sycophant is he
Who feels no cringing motion twitch his knee
When from a height too high for Shake-
speare nods
The wearer of a higher than Milton's crown.
Stoop, Chaucer, stoop: Keats, Shelley, Burns,
bow down:
These have no part with you, O Lords our
Gods.

II.

O Lords our Gods, it is not that ye sit
Serene above the thunder, and exempt
From strife of tongues and casualties that
tempt
Men merely found by proof of manhood fit
For service of their fellows: this is it
Which sets you past the reach of Time's
attempt,
Which gives us right of justified contempt
For commonwealths built up by mere men's
wit:

That gold unlocks not, nor may flatteries ope,
The portals of your heaven; that none may
hope
With you to watch how life beneath you
plods,
Save for high service given, high duty done;
That never was your rank ignobly won:
For this we give you praise, O Lords our
Gods.

III.

O Lords our Gods, the times are evil: you
Redeem the time, because of evil days.
While abject souls in servitude of praise
Bow down to heads untitled, and the crew
Whose honor dwells but in the deeds they
do,
From loftier hearts your nobler servants
raise
More manful salutation: yours are bays
That not the dawn's plebeian pearls bedew;
Yours, laurels plucked not of such hands as
wove
Old age its chaplet in Colonos' grove.
Our time, with heaven and with itself at
odds,
Makes all lands else as seas that seethe and
boil;
But yours are yet the corn and wine and oil,
And yours our worship yet, O Lords our
Gods.

ON THE BICENTENARY OF COR-
NEILLE,

CELEBRATED UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF
VICTOR HUGO.

SCARCE two hundred years are gone, and the
world is past away
As a noise of brawling wind, as a flash of
breaking foam,
That beheld the singer born who raised up
the dead of Rome;
And a mightier now than he bids him too
rise up to-day.
All the dim great age is dust, and its king is
tombless clay,
But its loftier laurel green as in living eyes
it clomb,
And his memory whom it crowned hath
his people's hearts for home,
And the shade across it falls of a lordlier-
flowering bay.

Stately shapes about the tomb of their mighty
maker pace,
Heads of high-plumed Spaniards shine, souls
revive of Roman race,
Sound of arms and words of wail through the
glowing darkness rise,
Speech of hearts heroic rings forth of lips
that know not breath,
And the light of thoughts august fills the pride
of kindling eyes
Whence of yore the spell of song drove the
shadow of darkling death.

IN SEPULCRETIS.

'Vidistis ipso rapere de rogo cœnam.'—CATULLUS,
LIX. 3.

To publish even one line of an author which he
himself has not intended for the public at large—es-
pecially letters which are addressed to private persons
—is to commit a despicable act of felony.'—HEINE.

I.

It is not then enough that men who give
The best gift given of man to man should
feel,
Alive, a snake's head ever at their heel :
Small hurt the worms may do them while
they live—
Such hurt as scorn for scorn's sake may for-
give.

But now, when death and fame have set
one seal
On tombs whereat Love, Grief, and Glory
kneel,

Men sift all secrets, in their critic sieve,
Of graves wherein the dust of death might
shrink

To know what tongues defile the dead
man's name

With loathsome love, and praise that stings
like shame.

Rest once was theirs, who had crossed the
mortal brink:

No rest, no reverence now: dull fools un-
dress

Death's holiest shrine, life's veriest naked-
ness.

II.

A man was born, sang, suffered, loved, and
died.

Men scorned him living: let us praise him
dead.

His life was brief and bitter, gently led
And proudly, but with pure and blameless
pride.

He wrought no wrong toward any; satisfied
With love and labor, whence our souls are
fed

With largesse yet of living wine and bread.
Come, let us praise him: here is nought to
hide.

Make bare the poor dead secrets of his heart,
Strip the stark-naked soul, that all may
peer,

Spy, smirk, sniff, snap, snort, snivel, snarl,
and sneer:

Let none so sad, let none so sacred part
Lie still for pity, rest unstirred for shame,
But all be scanned of all men. This is
fame.

III.

'Now, what a thing it is to be an ass!'

If one, that strutted up the brawling streets
As foreman of the flock whose concourse
greeted

Men's ears with bray more dissonant than
brass,

Would change from blame to praise as coarse
and crass

His natural note, and learn the fawning
feats

Of lapdogs, who but knows what luck he
meets?

But all in vain old fable holds her glass.

Mocked and reviled by men of poisonous
breath,

A great man dies: but one thing worst was
spared;

Not all his heart by their base hands lay
bared.

One comes to crown with praise the dust of
death;

And lo, through him this worst is brought
to pass.

Now, what a thing it is to be an ass!

IV.

Shame, such as never yet dealt heavier stroke
On heads more shameful, fall on theirs
through whom

Dead men may keep inviolate not their
tomb,

But all its depths these ravenous grave-worms
choke.

And yet what waste of wrath were this, to
invoke

* *Titus Andronicus*, Act iv., Scene 2.

Shame on the shameless ? Even their twin-born doom,
 Their native air of life, a carrion fume,
 Their natural breath of love, a noisome smoke,
 The bread they break, the cup whereof they drink,
 The record whose remembrance damns their name,
 Smells, tastes, and sounds of nothing but of shame.
 If thankfulness nor pity bids them think
 What work is this of theirs, and pause be-times,
 Not Shakespeare's grave would scare them off with rhymes.

LOVE AND SCORN.

I.

LOVE, loyallest and lordliest born of things,
 Immortal that shouldst be, though all else end,
 In plighted hearts of fearless friend with friend,
 Whose hand may curb or clip thy plume-plucked wings ?
 Not grief's nor time's : though these be lords and kings
 Crowned, and their yoke bid vassal passions bend,
 They may not pierce the spirit of sense, or blend
 Quick poison with the soul's live watersprings.
 The true clear heart whose core is manifold trust
 Fears not that very death may turn to dust
 Love lit therein as toward a brother born,
 If one touch make not all its fine gold rust,
 If one breath blight not all its glad ripe corn,
 And all its fire be turned to fire of scorn.

II.

Scorn only, scorn begot of bitter proof
 By keen experience of a trustless heart,
 Bears burning in her new-born hand the dart
 Wherewith love dies heart-stricken, and the roof
 Falls of his palace, and the storied woof
 Long woven of many a year with life's whole art
 Is rent like any rotten weed apart,
 And hardly with reluctant eyes aloof

Cold memory guards one relic scarce exempt
 Yet from the fierce corrosion of contempt,
 And hardly saved by pity. Woe are we
 That once we loved, and love not ; but we know
 The ghost of love, surviving yet in show.
 Where scorn has passed, is vain as grief must be.

III.

O sacred, just, inevitable scorn,
 Strong child of righteous judgment, whom
 with grief
 The rent heart bears, and wins not yet relief,
 Seeing of its pain so dire a portent born,
 Must thou not spare one sheaf of all the corn,
 One doir of all the treasure ? not one sheaf,
 Not one poor doir of all ? not one dead leaf
 Of all that fell and left behind a thorn ?
 Is man so strong that one should scorn another ?
 Is any as God, not made of mortal mother,
 That love should turn in him to gall and flame ?
 Nay : but the true is not the false heart's brother :
 Love cannot love disloyalty : the name
 That else it wears is love no more, but shame.

ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD DOYLE.

A LIGHT of blameless laughter, fancy-bred,
 Soft-souled and glad and kind as love or sleep,
 Fades, and sweet mirth's own eyes are fain to weep
 Because her blithe and gentlest bird is dead.
 Weep, elves and fairies all, that never shed
 Tear yet for mortal mourning : you that keep
 The doors of dreams whence naught of ill may creep,
 Mourn once for one whose lips your honey fed.
 Let waters of the Golden River steep
 The rose-roots whence his grave blooms rosy-red
 And murmuring of Hyblæan hives be deep
 About the summer silence of its bed,
 And nought less gracious than a violet peep
 Between the grass grown greener round his head.

IN MEMORY OF HENRY A. BRIGHT.

YET again another, ere his crowning year,
 Gone from friends that here may look for
 him no more.
 Never now for him shall hope set wide the
 door,
 Hope that hailed him hither, fain to greet
 him here.
 All the gracious garden-flowers he held so
 dear,
 Oldworld English blossoms, all his home-
 stead store,
 Oldworld grief had strewn them round his
 bier of yore,
 Bidding each drop leaf by leaf as tear by tear;
 Rarer lutes than mine had borne more tune-
 ful token,
 Touched by subtler hands than echoing
 time can wrong,
 Sweet as flowers had strewn his graveward
 path along.
 Now may no such old sweet dirges more be
 spoken,
 Now the flowers whose breath was very song
 are broken,
 Nor may sorrow find again so sweet a song.

A SOLITUDE.

SEA beyond sea, sand after sweep of sand,
 Here ivory smooth, here cloven and ridged
 with flow
 Of channelled waters soft as rain or snow,
 Stretch their lone length at ease beneath the
 bland
 Gray gleam of skies whose smile on wave and
 strand
 Shines weary like a man's who smiles to
 know
 That now no dream can mock his faith with
 show,
 Nor cloud for him seem living sea or land.
 Is there an end at all of all this waste,
 These crumbling cliffs defeatured and defaced,
 These ruinous heights of sea-sapped walls
 that slide
 Seaward with all their banks of bleak blown
 flowers
 Glad yet of life, ere yet their hope subside
 Beneath the coil of dull dense waves and
 hours?

VICTOR HUGO: L'ARCHIPEL DE LA
MANCHE.

SEA and land are fairer now, nor aught is all
 the same,
 Since a mightier hand than Time's hath
 woven their votive wreath.
 Rocks as swords half drawn from out the
 smooth wave's jewelled sheath,
 Fields whose flowers a tongue divine hath
 numbered name by name,
 Shores whereby the midnight or the noon
 clothed round with flame
 Hears the clamor jar and grind which
 utters from beneath
 Cries of hungering waves like beasts fast
 bound that gnash their teeth,
 All of these the sun that lights them lights
 not like his fame;
 None of these is but the thing it was before
 he came.
 Where the darkling overfalls like dens of
 torment seethe,
 High on tameless moorlands, down in
 meadows bland and tame,
 Where the garden hides, and where the
 wind uproots the heath,
 Glory now henceforth forever, while the
 world shall be,
 Shines, a star that keeps not time with change
 on earth and sea.

THE TWILIGHT OF THE LORDS.

I.
 Is the sound a trumpet blown, or a bell for
 burial tolled,
 Whence the whole air vibrates now to the
 clash of words like swords—
 'Let us break their bonds in sunder, and
 cast away their cords;
 Long enough the world has mocked us, and
 marvelled to behold
 How the grown man bears the curb whence
 his boyhood was controlled?'
 Nay, but hearken: surer counsel more sober
 speech affords:
 'Is the past not all inscribed with the
 praises of our Lords?
 Is the memory dead of deeds done of yore,
 the love grown cold
 That should bind our hearts to trust in their
 counsels wise and bold?
 These that stand against you now, sense-
 less crowds and heartless hordes,

Are not these the sons of men that withstood
your kings of old?

Theirs it is to bind and loose; theirs the
key that knows the wards,
Theirs the staff to lead or smite; yours, the
spades and ploughs and hods:
Theirs to hear and yours to cry, Power is
Yours, O Lords our Gods.'

II.

Hear, O England: these are they that would
counsel thee aright.

Wouldst thou fain have all thy sons sons of
thine indeed, and free?

Nay, but then no more at all as thou hast
been shalt thou be:

Needs must many dwell in darkness, that
some may look on light;

Needs must poor men brook the wrong that
ensures the rich man's right.

How shall kings and lords be worshipped,
if no man bow the knee?

How, if no man worship these, may thy
praise endure with thee?

How, except thou trust in these, shall thy
name not lose its might?

These have had their will of thee since the
Norman came to smite:

Sires on grandsires, even as wave after
wave along the sea,

Sons on sires have followed, steadfast as
clouds or hours in flight.

Time alone hath power to say, time alone
hath eyes to see,

If your walls of rule be built but of clay-com-
pacted sods,

If your place of old shall know you no more,
O Lords our Gods.

III.

Through the stalls wherein ye sit sounds a
sentence while we wait,

Set your house in order: is it not builded
on the sand?

Set your house in order, seeing the night is
hard at hand.

As the twilight of the Gods in the northern
dream of fate

Is this hour that comes against you, albeit
this hour come late.

Ye whom Time and Truth bade heed, and
ye would not understand,

Now an axe draws nigh the tree overshad-
owing all the land,

And its edge of doom is set to the root of all
your state.

Light is more than darkness now, faith than
fear and hope than hate;

And what morning wills, behold, all the
night shall not withstand.

Rods of office, helms of rule, staffs of wise
men, crowns of great.

While the people willed, ye bare; now
their hopes and hearts expand,

Time with silent foot makes dust of your
broken crowns and rods,

And the lordship of your godhead is gone, O
Lords our Gods.

CLEAR THE WAY!

CLEAR the way, my lords and lackeys! you
have had your day.

Here you have your answer—England's yea
against your nay:

Long enough your house has held you: up,
and clear the way!

Lust and falsehood, craft and traffic, prece-
dent and gold,

Tongue of courtier, kiss of harlot, promise
bought and sold,

Gave you heritage of empire over thralls of
old.

Now that all these things are rotten, all their
gold is rust,

Quenched the pride they lived by, dead the
faith and cold the lust,

Shall their heritage not also turn again to
dust?

By the grace of these they reigned, who left
their sons their sway:

By the grace of these, what England says her
lords unsay:

Till at last her cry go forth against them—
Clear the way!

By the grace of trust in treason knaves have
lived and lied:

By the force of fear and folly fools have fed
their pride:

By the strength of sloth and custom reason
stands defied.

Lest perchance your reckoning on some latter
day be worse,

Halt and hearken, lords of lands and princes
of the purse,

Ere the tide be full that comes with blessing
and with curse.

Where we stand, as where you sit, scarce
falls a sprinkling spray;
But the wind that swells, the wave that fol-
lows, none shall stay:
Spread no more of sail for shipwreck: out,
and clear the way!

A WORD FOR THE COUNTRY.

MEN, born of the land that for ages
Has been honored where freedom was
dear,
Till your labor wax fat on its wages
You shall never be peers of a peer.
Where might is, the right is:
Long purses make strong swords.
Let weakness learn meekness;
God save the House of Lords!

You are free to consume in stagnation:
You are equal in right to obey:
You are brothers in bonds, and the nation
Is your mother—whose sons are her prey.
Those others your brothers,
Who toil not, weave, nor till,
Refuse you and use you
As waiters on their will.

But your fathers bowed down to their masters
And obeyed them and served and adored.
Shall the sheep not give thanks to their
pastors?
Shall the serf not give praise to his lord?
Time, waning and gaining,
Grown other now than then,
Needs pastors and masters
For sheep, and not for men.

If his grandsire did service in battle,
If his grandam was kissed by a king,
Must men to my lord be as cattle
Or as apes that he leads in a string?
To deem so, to dream so,
Would bid the world proclaim
The dastards for bastards,
Not heirs of England's fame.

Not in spite but in right of dishonor,
There are actors who trample your boards
Till the earth that endures you upon her
Grows weary to bear you, my lords.
Your token is broken,
It will not pass for gold:
Your glory looks hoary,
Your sun in heaven turns cold.

They are worthy to reign on their brothers,
So condemn them as clods and as carles,
Who are Graces by grace of such mothers
As brightened the bed of King Charles.
What manner of banner,
What fame is this they flaunt,
That Britain, soul-smitten,
Should shrink before their vaunt?

Bright sons of sublime prostitution,
You are made of the mire of the street
Where your grandmothers walked in pollution
Till a coronet shone at their feet.
Your Graces, whose faces
Bear high the bastard's brand,
Seem stronger no longer
Than all this honest land.

But the sons of her soldiers and seamen,
They are worthy forsooth of their hire.
If the father won praise from all free men,
Shall the sons not exult in their sire?
Let money make sunny
And power make proud their lives,
And feed them and breed them
Like drones in drowsiest hives.

But if haply the name be a burden
And the souls be no kindred of theirs,
Should wise men rejoice in such guerdon
Or brave men exult in such heirs?
Or rather the father
Frown, shamefaced on the son.
And no men but foemen,
Deriding, cry 'Well done'?

Let the gold and the land they inherit
Pass ever from hand into hand:
In right of the forefather's merit
Let the gold be the son's, and the land.
Soft raiment, rich payment,
High place, the state affords;
Full measure of pleasure:
But now no more, my lords,

Is the future beleaguered with dangers
If the poor be far other than slaves?
Shall the sons of the land be as strangers
In the land of their forefathers' graves?
Shame were it to bear it,
And shame it were to see:
If free men you be, men,
Let proof proclaim you free.

'But democracy means dissolution:
See, laden with clamor and crime,
How the darkness of dim revolution

Comes deepening the twilight of time !
 Ah, better the fetter
 That holds the poor man's hand
 Than peril of sterile
 Blind change that wastes the land.

' Gaze forward through clouds that environ ;
 It shall be as it was in the past :
 Not with dreams, but with blood and with
 iron,
 Shall a nation be moulded to last.'
 So teach they, so preach they,
 Who dream themselves the dream
 That hallows the gallows
 And bids the scaffold stream.

' With a hero at head, and a nation
 Well gagged and well drilled and well
 cowed,
 And a gospel of war and damnation,
 Has not empire a right to be proud ?'
 Fools prattle and tattle
 Of freedom, reason, right,
 The beauty of duty,
 The loveliness of light.

' But we know, we believe it, we see it,
 Force only has power upon earth.'
 So be it! and ever so be it
 For souls that are bestial by birth!
 Let Prussian with Russian
 Exchange the kiss of slaves :
 But sea-folk are free folk
 By grace of winds and waves.

Has the past from the sepulchres beckoned ?
 Let answer from Englishmen be—
 No man shall be lord of us reckoned
 Who is baser, not better, than we.
 No coward, empowered
 To soil a brave man's name :
 For shame's sake and fame's sake,
 Enough of fame and shame.

Fame needs not the golden addition ;
 Shame bears it abroad as a brand.
 Let the deed, and no more the tradition,
 Speak out and be heard through the land.
 Pride, rootless and fruitless,
 No longer takes and gives:
 But surer and purer
 The soul of England lives.

He is master and lord of his brothers
 Who is worthier and wiser than they.
 Him only, him surely, shall others,
 Else equal, observe and obey.
 Truth, flawless and awless,
 Do falsehood what it can,

Makes royal the loyal
 And simple heart of man.

Who are these, then, that England should
 hearken,
 Who rage and wax wroth and grow pale
 If she turn from the sunsets that darken
 And her ship for the morning set sail ?
 Let strangers fear dangers :
 All know, that hold her dear,
 Dishonor upon her
 Can only fall through fear.

Men, born of the landsmen and seamen
 Who served her with souls and with **swords**,
 She bids you be brothers, and free men,
 And lordless, and fearless of lords.
 She cares not, she dares not
 Care now for gold or steel :
 Light lead her, truth speed her,
 God save the Commonweal !

A WORD FOR THE NATION.

I.

A WORD across the water
 Against our ears is borne.
 Of threatenings and of slaughter,
 Of rage and spite and scorn :
 We have not, alack, an ally to befriend us,
 And the season is ripe to extirpate and end
 us :
 Let the German touch hands with the Gaul,
 And the fortress of England must fall ;
 And the sea shall be swept of her seamen,
 And the waters they ruled be their graves,
 And Dutchmen and Frenchmen be free men,
 And Englishmen slaves.

II.

Our time once more is over,
 Once more our end is near ;
 A bull without a drover,
 The Briton reels to rear,
 And the van of the nations is held by his
 betters,
 And the seas of the world shall be loosed
 from his fetters,
 And his glory shall pass as a breath,
 And the life that is in him be death :
 And the sepulchre sealed on his glory
 For a sign to the nations shall be
 As of 'Tyre and of Carthage in story,
 Once lords of the sea.

III.

The lips are wise and loyal,

The hearts are brave and true,

Imperial thoughts and royal

Make strong the clamorous crew,

Whence louder and prouder the noise of defiance

Rings rage from the grave of a trustless alliance.

And bids us beware and be warned,
As abhorred of all nations and scorned,

As a swordless and spiritless nation,

A wreck on the waste of the waves.

So foams the released indignation

Of masterless slaves.

IV.

Brute throats that miss the collar,

Bowed backs that ask the whip,

Stretched hands that lack the dollar,

And many a lie-seared lip,

Forefeel and foreshow for us signs as funereal

As the signs that were regal of yore and imperial ;

We shall pass as the princes they served,

We shall reap what our fathers deserved,

And the place that was England's be taken

By one that is worthier than she,

And the yoke of her empire be shaken

Like spray from the sea.

V.

French hounds, whose necks are aching

Still from the chain they crave,

In dog-day madness breaking

The dog-leash, thus may rave :

But the seas that for ages have fostered and fenced her

Laugh, echoing the yell of their kennel against her

And their moan if destruction draw near them

And the roar of her laughter to hear them ;

For she knows that if Englishmen be men

Their England has all that she craves ;

All love and all honor from free men,

All hatred from slaves.

VI.

All love that rests upon her

Like sunshine and sweet air,

All light of perfect honor

And praise than ends in prayer,

She wins not more surely, she wears not more proudly,

Than the token of tribute that clatters thus loudly,

The tribute of foes when they meet

That rattles and rings at her feet,

The tribute of rage and of rancor,

The tribute of slaves to the free,

To the people whose hope hath its anchor
Made fast in the sea.

VII.

No fool that bows the back he

Feels fit for scourge or brand,

No scurril scribes that lackey

The lords of Lackeyland,

No penman that yearns, as he turns on his pallet,

For the place or the pence of a peer or a valet,

No whelp of as currish a pack

As the litter whose yelp it gives back,

Though he answer the cry of his brother

As echoes might answer from caves,

Shall be witness as though for a mother

Whose children were slaves.

VIII.

But those found fit to love her,

Whose love has root in faith,

Who hear, though darkness cover

Time's face, what memory saith,

Who seek not the service of great men or small men

But the weal that is common for comfort of all men,

Those yet that in trust have beholden

Truth's dawn over England grow golden

And quicken the darkness that stagnates

And scatter the shadows that flee,

Shall reply for her meanest as magnates

And masters by sea.

IX.

And all shall mark her station,

Her message all shall hear,

When, equal-eyed, the nation

Bids all her sons draw near,

And freedom be more than tradition or faction,

And thought be no swifter to serve her than action,

And justice alone be above her,

That love may be prouder to love her,

And time on the crest of her story

Inscribe, as remembrance engraves,

The sign that subdues with its glory
Kings, princes, and slaves.

A WORD FROM THE PSALMIST.

Ps. xciv. 8.

I.

'TAKE heed, ye unwise among the people:
 O ye fools, when will ye understand?'
 From pulpit or choir beneath the steeple,
 Though the words be fierce, the tones
 are bland.
 But a louder than the Church's echo thunders
 In the ears of men who may not choose but
 hear;
 And the heart in him that hears it leaps and
 wonders,
 With triumphant hope astonished, or with
 fear.
 For the names whose sound was power
 awaken
 Neither love nor reverence now nor
 dread;
 Their strongholds and shrines are stormed
 and taken,
 Their kingdom and all its works are
 dead.

II.

Take heed: for the tide of time is risen:
 It is full not yet, though now so high
 That spirits and hopes long pent in prison
 Feel round them a sense of freedom
 nigh,
 And a savor keen and sweet of brine and
 billow,
 And a murmur deep and strong of deepening
 strength.
 Though the watchman dream, with sloth or
 pride for pillow,
 And the night be long, not endless is its
 length.
 From the springs of dawn, from clouds
 that sever,
 From the equal heavens and the east-
 ward sea,
 The witness comes that endures forever.
 Till men be brethren and thralls be
 free.

III.

But the wind of the wings of dawn ex-
 panding
 Strikes chill on your hearts as change
 and death.
 Ye are old, but ye have not understand-
 ing;

And proud, but your pride is a dead
 man's breath.
 And your wise men, toward whose words and
 signs ye hearken
 And your strong men, in whose hands ye
 put your trust,
 Strain eyes to behold but clouds and dreams
 that darken,
 Stretch hands that can find but weapons
 red with rust.
 Their watchword rings, and the night re-
 joices,
 But the lark's note laughs at the night-
 bird's notes—
 'Is virtue verily found in voices?
 Or is wisdom won when all win votes?'

IV.

'Take heed, ye unwise indeed, who listen
 When the wind's wings beat and shift
 and change;
 Whose hearts are uplift, whose eyeballs
 glisten,
 With desire of new things great and strange.
 Let not dreams misguide nor any visions wrong
 you:
 That which has been, it is now as it was
 then.
 Is not Compromise of old a god among you?
 Is not Precedent indeed a king of men?
 But the windy hopes that lead mislead
 you,
 And the sounds ye hear are void and
 vain.
 Is a vote a coat? will franchise feed you,
 Or words be a roof against the rain?

V.

'Eight ages are gone since kingship enter-
 ed,
 With knights and peers at its harness-
 ed back,
 And the land, no more in its own strength
 centred,
 Was cast for a prey to the princely pack.
 But we pared the fangs and clipped the raven-
 ing claws of it,
 And good was in time brought forth of an
 evil thing.
 And the land's high name waxed lordlier in
 war because of it.
 When chartered Right had bridled and
 curbed the king.
 And what so fair has the world behold-
 en,

And what so firm has withstood the
years,
As Monarchy bound in chains all golden,
And Freedom guarded about with peers?

VI.

'How think ye? know not your lords and
masters

What collars are meet for brawling
throats?

Is change not mother of strange disasters?
Shall plague or peril be stayed by votes?

Out of precedent and privilege and order

Have we plucked the flower of compromise,
whose root

Bears blossoms that shine from border again
to border,

And the mouths of many are fed with its
temperate fruit.

Your masters are wiser than ye, their
henchmen:

Your lords know surely whereof ye
have need.

Equality? Fools, would you fain be
Frenchmen?

Is equity more than a word indeed?

VII.

'Your voices, forsooth, your most sweet
voices,

Your worthy voices, your love, your hate,
Your chioce, who know not whereof your
choice is,

What stays are these for a stable state?
Inconstancy, blind and deaf with its own
fierce babble,

Swells ever your throats with storm of un-
certain cheers:

He leans on straws who leans on a light-
souled rabble;

His trust is frail who puts not his trust in
peers.'

So shrills the message whose word con-
vinces

Of righteousness knaves, of wisdom
fools;

That serfs may boast them because of
princes,

And the weak rejoice that the strong
man rules.

VIII.

True friends, ye people, are these, the
faction

Full-mouthed that flatters and snarls and
bays,

That fawns and foams with alternate action,
And mocks the names that it soils with
praise.

As from fraud and force their power had first
beginning,

So by righteousness and peace it may not
stand,

But by craft of state and nets of secret spin-
ning,

Words that weave and unweave wiles like
ropes of sand,

Form, custom, and gold, and laws grown
hoary,

And strong tradition that guards the
gate:

To these, O people, to these give glory,
That your name among nations may be
great.

IX.

How long—for haply not now much longer—
Shall fear put faith in a faithless creed,

And shapes and shadows of truths be
stronger

In strong men's eyes than the truth in-
deed?

If freedom be not a word that dies when
spoken,

If justice be not a dream whence men must
wake,

How shall not the bonds of the thraldom of
old be broken,

And right put might in the hands of them
that break?

For clear as a tocsin from the steeple

Is the cry gone forth along the land.

Take heed, ye unwise among the people:
O ye fools, when will ye understand?

A BALLAD AT PARTING.

SEA to sea that clasps and fosters England,
uttering evermore

Song eterne and praise immortal of the in-
dimitable shore,

Lifts aloud her constant heart up, south to
north and east to west,

Here in speech that shames all music, there
in thunder-throated roar,

Chiming concord out of discord, waking rapt-
ure out of rest.

All her ways are lovely, all her works and
symbols are divine,

Yet shall man love best what first bade leap
his heart and bend his knee;

Yet where first his whole soul worshipped
shall his soul set up her shrine:

Nor may love not know the lovelier, fair as
both beheld may be,

Here the limitless north-eastern, there the
strait south-western sea.

Though their chant bear all one burden, as
ere man was born it bore;

Though the burden be diviner than the songs
all souls adore;

Yet may love not choose but choose be-
tween them which to love the best.

Me the sea my nursing-mother, me the Chan-
nel green and hoar,

Holds at heart more fast than all things,
bares for me the goodlier breast.

Lifts for me the lordlier love-song, bids for
me more sunlight shine,

Sounds for me the stormier trumpet of the
sweeter strain to me.

So the broad pale Thames is loved not like
the tawny springs of Tyne:

Choice is clear between them for the soul
whose vision holds in fee

Here the limitless north-eastern, there the
strait south-western sea.

Choice is clear, but dear is either; nor has
either not in store

Many a likeness, many a written sign of spirit-
searching lore,

Whence the soul takes fire of sweet remem-
brance, magnified and blest.

Thought of songs whose flame-winged feet
have trod the unfooted water-floor.

When the lord of all the living lords of
souls bade speed their quest;

Soft live sound like children's babble down
the rippling sand's incline,

Or the lovely song that loves them, hailed
with thankful prayer and plea;

These are parcels of the harvest here whose
gathered sheaves are mine,

Garnered now, but sown and reaped where
winds make wild with wrath or glee

Here the limitless north-eastern, there the
strait south-western sea.

Song, thy name is freedom, seeing thy
strength was born of breeze and brine.

Fare now forth and fear no fortune: such a
seal is set on thee.

Joy begat and memory bare thee, seeing in
spirit a twofold sign,

Even the sign of those thy fosters, each as
thou from all time free,

Here the limitless north-eastern, there the
strait south-western sea.

A CENTURY OF ROUNDELS.

DEDICATION.

TO

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

*Songs light as these may sound, though deep
and strong*

*The heart spake through them, scarce should
hope to please*

*Ears tuned to strains of loftier thoughts than
throng*

Songs light as these.

*Yet grace may set their sometime doubt at ease,
Nor need their too rash reverence fear to wrong
The shrine it serves at and the hope it sees.*

*For childlike loves and laughers thence prolong
Notes that bid enter, fearless as the breeze,
Even to the shrine of holiest-hearted song,
Songs light as these.*

IN HARBOR.

I.

GOODNIGHT and goodbye to the life whose
signs denote us

As mourners clothed with regret for the life
gone by;

To the waters of gloom whence winds of the
dayspring float us

Goodnight and goodbye.

A time is for mourning, a season for grief to sigh;

But were we not fools and blind, by day to devote us

As thralls to the darkness, unseen of the sun-dawn's eye?

We have drunken of Lethe at length, we have eaten of lotus;

What hurts it us here that sorrows are born and die?

We have said to the dream that caressed and the dread that smote us

Goodnight and goodbye.

II.

Outside of the port ye are moored in, lying
Close from the wind and at ease from the tide,

What sounds come swelling, what notes fall dying
Outside?

They will not cease, they will not abide:
Voices of presage in darkness crying
Pass and return and relapse aside.

Ye see not, but hear ye not wild wings flying
To the future that wakes from the past that died?

Is grief still sleeping, is joy not sighing
Outside?

THE WAY OF THE WIND.

THE wind's way in the deep sky's hollow
None may measure, as none can say
How the heart in her shows the swallow
The wind's way.

Hope nor fear can avail to stay
Waves that whiten on wrecks that wallow,
Times and seasons that wane and slay.

Life and love, till the strong night swallow
Thought and hope and the red last ray,
Swim the waters of years that follow
The wind's way.

'HAD I WIST.'

HAD I wist, when life was like a warm wind
playing
Light and loud through sundawn and the
dew's bright mist,

How the time should come for hearts to sight
in saying

'Had I wist'—

Surely not the roses, laughing as they kissed,
Not the lovelier laugh of seas in sunshine
swaying,
Should have lured my soul to look thereon
and list.

Now the wind is like a soul cast out and
praying

Vainly, prayers that pierce not ears when
hearts resist:

Now mine own soul sighs, adrift as wind and
straying,

'Had I wist.'

RECOLLECTIONS.

I.

YEARS upon years, as a course of clouds that
thicken

Thronging the ways of the wind that shifts
and veers,

Pass, and the flames of remembered fires re-
quicken

Years upon years.

Surely the thought in a man's heart hopes or
fears

Now that forgetfulness needs must here have
stricken

Anguish, and sweetened the sealed-up springs
of tears.

Ah, but the strength of regret that strain and
sicken,

Yearning for love that the veil of death en-
dears,

Slackens not wing for the wings of years that
quicken—

Years upon years.

II.

Years upon years, and the flame of love's high
altar

Trembles and sinks, and the sense of listening
ears

Heeds not the sound that it heard of love's
blithe psalter.

Years upon years.

Only the sense of heart that hearkens hears,
Louder than dreams that assail and doubts
that palter,

Sorrow that slept and that wakes ere sundawn
peers.

Wakes, that the heart may behold, and yet
not falter,
Faces of children as stars unknown of, spheres
Seen but of love, that endures though all
things alter,
Years upon years.

III.

Years upon years, as a watch by night that
passes,
Pass, and the light of their eyes is fire that
sears
Slowly the hopes of the fruit that life amasses
Years upon years.

Pale as the glimmer of stars on moorland
meres
Lighten the shadows reverberate from the
glasses
Held in their hands as they pass among their
peers.

Lights that are shadows, as ghosts on grave-
yard grasses,
Moving on paths that the moon of memory
cheers,
Show but as mists over cloudy mountain
passes
Years upon years.

TIME AND LIFE.

I.

TIME, thy name is sorrow, says the stricken
Heart of life, laid waste with wasting flame
Ere the change of things and thoughts re-
quicken,

Time, thy name.

Girt about with shadow, blind and lame,
Ghosts of things that smite and thoughts that
sicken
Hunt and hound thee down to death and
shame.

Eyes of hours whose paces halt or quicken
Read in bloodred lines of loss and blame,
Writ where cloud and darkness round it
thicken,

Time, thy name.

II.

Nay, but rest is born of me for healing,
—So might haply time, with voice repress,
Speak : is grief the last gift of my dealing?
Nay, but rest.

All the world is wearied, east and west,
Tired with toil to watch the slow sun wheeling,
Twelve loud hours of life's laborious quest.

Eyes forspent with vigil, faint and reeling,
Find at last my comfort, and are blest,
Not with rapturous light of life's revealing—
Nay, but rest.

A DIALOGUE.

I.

DEATH, if thou wilt, fain would I plead with
thee :
Canst thou not spare, of all our hopes have
built,
One shelter where our spirits fain would be,
Death, if thou wilt?

No dome with suns and dewes impearled and
gilt,
Imperial : but some roof of wildwood tree,
Too mean for sceptre's heft or swordblade's
hilt.

Some low sweet roof where love might live,
set free
From change and fear and dreams of grief or
guilt ;
Canst thou not leave life even thus much to
see,
Death, if thou wilt?

II.

Man, what art thou to speak and plead with
me ?
What knowest thou of my workings, where
and how
What things I fashion? Nay, behold and
see,
Man, what art thou?

Thy fruits of life, and blossoms of thy bough,
What are they but my seedlings? Earth and
sea
Bear nought but when I breathe on it must
bow.

Bow thou too down before me : though thou
 be
 Great, all the pride shall fade from off thy
 brow,
 When Time and strong Oblivion ask of thee,
 Man, what art thou ?

III.

Death, if thou be or be not, as was said,
 Immortal ; if thou make us nought, or we
 Survive : thy power is made but of our dread,
 Death, if thou be.

Thy might is made out of our fear of thee :
 Who fears thee not, hath plucked from off
 thine head
 The crown of cloud that darkens earth and
 sea.

Earth, sea, and sky, as rain or vapor shed,
 Shall vanish ; all the shows of them shall
 flee :
 Then shall we know full surely, quick or
 dead,
 Death, if thou be.

PLUS ULTRA.

FAR beyond the sunrise and the sunset rises
 Heaven, with worlds on worlds that lighten
 and respond :
 Thought can see not thence the goal of hope's
 surmises
 Far beyond.

Night and day have made an everlasting
 bond
 Each with each to hide in yet more deep dis-
 guises
 Truth, till souls of men that thirst for truth
 despond.

All that man in pride of spirit slights or
 prizes,
 All the dreams that make him fearful, fain,
 or fond,
 Fade at forethought's touch of life's unknown
 surprises
 Far beyond.

A DEAD FRIEND.

I.

GONE, O gentle heart and true,
 Friend of hopes foregone,

Hopes and hopeful days with you
 Gone ?

Days of old that shone
 Saw what none shall see anew,
 When we gazed thereon.

Soul as clear as sunlit dew,
 Why so soon pass on,
 Forth from all we loved and knew
 Gone ?

II.

Friend of many a season fled,
 What may sorrow send
 Toward thee now from lips that said
 ' Friend ? '

Sighs and songs to blend
 Praise with pain un comforted
 Though the praise ascend ?

Darkness hides no dearer head :
 Why should darkness end
 Day so soon, O dear and dead
 Friend ?

III.

Dear in death, thou hast thy part
 Yet in life, to cheer
 Hearts that held thy gentle heart
 Dear.

Time and chance may sear
 Hope with grief, and death may part
 Hand from hand's clasp here :

Memory, blind with tears that start,
 Sees through every tear
 All that made thee, as thou art,
 Dear.

IV.

True and tender, single-souled,
 What should memory do
 Weeping o'er the trust we hold
 True ?

Known and loved of few,
 But of these, though small their fold,
 Loved how well were you !

Change, that makes of new things old,
 Leaves one old thing new ;
 Love which promised truth, and told
 True.

V.

Kind as heaven, while earth's control
 Still had leave to bind

Thee, thy heart was toward man's whole
Kind.

Thee no shadows blind
Now: the change of hours that roll
Leaves thy sleep behind

Love, that hears thy death-bell toll
Yet, may call to mind
Scarce a soul as thy sweet soul
Kind

VI.

How should life, O friend, forget
Death, whose guest art thou?
Faith responds to love's regret,
How?

Still, for us that bow
Sorrowing, still, though life be set,
Shines thy bright mild brow.

Yea, though death and thou be met,
Love may find thee now
Still, albeit we know not yet
How.

VII.

Past as music fades, that shone
While its life might last;
As a song-bird's shadow flown
Past!

Death's reverberate blast
Now for music's lord has blown
Whom thy love held fast.

Dead thy king, and void his throne:
Yet for grief at last
Love makes music of his own
Past.

PAST DAYS.

I.

DEAD and gone, the days we had together,
Shadow-stricken all the lights that shone
Round them, flown as flies the blown-foam's
feather,
Dead and gone.

Where we went, we twain, in time foregone,
Forth by land and sea, and cared not whether,
If I go again, I go alone.

Bound am I with time as with a tether;
Thee perchance death leads enfranchised on,
Far from deathlike life and changeful wea-
ther,
Dead and gone.

II.

Above the sea and sea-washed town we dwelt,
We twain together, two brief summers, free
From heed of hours as light as clouds that
melt

Above the sea.

Free from all heed of aught at all were we,
Save chance of change that clouds or sun-
beams dealt
And gleam of heaven to windward or to lee.

The Norman downs with bright gray waves
for belt
Were more for us than inland ways might be;
A clearer sense of nearer heaven was felt
Above the sea.

III.

Cliffs and downs and headlands which the
forward-hasting
Flight of dawn and eve empurples and em-
browns,
Wings of wild sea-winds and stormy seasons
wasting

Cliffs and downs,
These, or ever man was, were: the same sky
frowns,
Laughs, and lightens, as before his soul, fore-
casting
Times to be, conceived such hopes as time
discrowns.

These we loved of old: but now for me the
blasting
Breath of death makes dull the bright small
seaward towns,
Clothes with human change these all but
everlasting
Cliffs and downs.

AUTUMN AND WINTER.

I.

THREE months bade wane and wax the win-
tering moon
Between two dates of death, while men were
fain
Yet of the living light that all too soon
Three months bade wane.

Cold autumn, wan with wrath of wind and
rain,
Saw pass a soul sweet as the sovereign tune
That death smote silent when he smote again.

First went my friend, in life's mid light of
noon,
Who loved the lord of music: then the strain
Whence earth was kindled like as heaven in
June
Three months bade wane.

II.

A herald soul before its master's flying
Touched by some few moons first the dark-
ling goal
Where shades rose up to greet the shade,
espying
A herald soul;

Shades of dead lords of music, who control
Men living by the might of men undying,
With strength of strains that make delight of
dole.

The deep dense dust on death's dim thresh-
old lying
Trembled with sense of kindling sound that
stole
Through darkness, and the night gave ear,
describing
A herald soul.

III.

One went before, one after, but so fast
They seem gone hence together, from the
shore
Whence we now gaze: yet ere the mightier
passed
One went before;

One whose whole heart of love, being set of
yore
On that high joy which music lends us, cast
Light round him forth of music's radiant
store.

Then went, while earth on winter glared
aghast,
The mortal god he worshipped, through the
door
Wherethrough so late, his lover to the last,
One went before.

IV.

A star had set an hour before the sun
Sank from the skies wherethrough his heart's
pulse yet
Thrills audibly: but few took heed, or none,
A star had set.

All heaven rings back, sonorous with regret,
The deep dirge of the sunset: how should one
Soft star be missed in all the concourse met?

But, O sweet single heart whose work is done,
Whose songs are silent, how should I forget
That ere the sunset's fiery goal was won
A star had set?

THE DEATH OF RICHARD WAGNER.

I.

MOURNING on earth, as when dark hours
descend,
Wide-winged with plagues, from heaven;
when hope and mirth
Wane, and no lips rebuke or reprehend
Mourning on earth.

The soul wherein her songs of death and
birth,
Darkness and light, were wont to sound and
blend,
Now silent, leaves the whole world less in
worth.

Winds that make moan and triumph, skies
that bend,
Thunders, and sound of tides in gulf and firth,
Spake through his spirit of speech, whose
death should send
Mourning on earth.

II.

The world's great heart, whence all things
strange and rare
Take form and sound, that each inseparate
part
May bear its burden in all tuned thoughts
that share
The world's great heart—

The fountain forces, whence like steeds that
start
Leap forth the powers of earth and fire and
air,
Seas that revolve and rivers that depart—

Spake, and were turned to song: yea, all they
 were,
 With all their works, found in his mastering
 art
 Speech as of powers whose uttered word laid
 bare
 The world's great heart.

III.

From the depths of the sea, from the well-
 springs of earth, from the wastes of the
 midmost night,
 From the fountains of darkness and tempest
 and thunder, from heights where the soul
 would be,
 The spell of the mage of music evoked their
 sense, as an unknown light
 From the depths of the sea.

As a vision of heaven from the hollows of
 ocean, that none but a god might see,
 Rose out of the silence of things unknown of
 a presence, a form, a might,
 And we heard as a prophet that hears God's
 message against him, and may not flee.

Eye might not endure it, but ear and heart
 with a rapture of dark delight,
 With a terror and wonder whose care was
 joy, and a passion of thought set free,
 Felt inly the rising of doom divine as a sun-
 dawn risen to sight
 From the depths of the sea

TWO PRELUDES.

I.

LOHENGRIN.

LOVE, out of the depth of things,
 As a dewfall felt from above,
 From the heaven whence only springs
 Love—

Love, heard from the heights thereof,
 The clouds and the watersprings,
 Draws close as the clouds remove.

And the soul in it speaks and sings,
 A swan sweet-souled as a dove,
 An echo that only rings
 Love.

II.

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE.

Fate out of the deep sea's gloom,
 When a man's heart's pride grows great,
 And nought seems now to foredoom
 Fate,

Fate, laden with fears in wait,
 Draws close through the clouds that loom,
 Till the soul see, all too late,

More dark than a dead world's tomb,
 More high than the sheer dawn's gate,
 More deep than the wide sea's womb,
 Fate.

THE LUTE AND THE LYRE.

DEEP desire, that pierces heart and spirit to
 the root,
 Finds reluctant voice in verse that yearns like
 soaring fire,
 Takes exultant voice when music holds in
 high pursuit
 Deep desire.

Keen as burns the passion of the rose whose
 buds respire,
 Strong as grows the yearning of the blossom
 towards the fruit,
 Sounds the secret half unspoken ere the deep
 tones tire.

Slow subsides the rapture that possessed
 love's flower soft lute,
 Slow the palpitation of the triumph of the
 lyre:
 Still the soul feels burn a flame unslaked
 though these be mute,
 Deep desire.

PLUS INTRA.

SOUL within sense, immeasurable obscure,
 Insepulchred and deathless, through the dense
 Deep elements may scarce be felt as pure
 Soul within sense.

From depth and height by measurers left im-
 mense,
 Thro' sound and shape and color, comes the
 unsure
 Vague utterance, fitful with supreme suspense.

All that may pass, and all that must endure,
Song speaks not, painting shows not : more
intense

And keen than these, art wakes with music's
lure

Soul within sense.

CHANGE.

BUT now life's face beholden
Seemed bright as heaven's bare brow
With hope of gifts withholden
But now.

From time's full-flowering bough
Each bud spake bloom to embolden
Love's heart, and seal his vow.

Joy's eyes grew deep with olden
Dreams, born he wist not how ;
Thought's meanest garb was golden ;
But now !

A BABY'S DEATH.

I.

A LITTLE SOUL scarce fledged for earth
Takes wing with heaven again for goal
Even while we hailed as fresh from birth
A little soul.

Our thoughts ring sad as bells that toll,
Not knowing beyond this blind world's girth
What things are writ in heaven's full scroll.

Our fruitfulness is there but dearth,
And all things held in time's control
Seem there, perchance, ill dreams, not worth
A little soul.

II.

The little feet that never trod
Earth, never strayed in field or street,
What hand leads upward back to God
The little feet ?

A rose in June's most honied heat.
When life makes keen the kindling sod,
Was not so soft and warm and sweet.

Their pilgrimage's period
A few swift moons have seen complete
Since mother's hand first clasped and shod
The little feet.

III.

The little hands that never sought
Earth's prizes, worthless all as sands,
What gift has death, God's servant, brought
The little hands ?

We ask : but love's self silent stands,
Love, that lends eyes and wings to thought
To search where death's dim heaven expands.

Ere this, perchance, though love know nought,
Flowers fill them, grown in lovelier lands,
Where hands of guiding angels caught
The little hands.

IV.

The little eyes that never knew
Light other than of dawning skies,
What new life now lights up anew
The little eyes ?

Who knows but on their sleep may rise
Such light as never heaven let through
To lighten earth from Paradise ?

No storm, we know, may change the blue
Soft heaven that haply death describes :
No tears, like these in ours, bedew
The little eyes.

V.

Was life so strange, so sad the sky,
So strait the wide world's range,
He would not stay to wonder why
Was life so strange ?

Was earth's fair house a joyless grange
Beside that house on high
Whence Time that bore him failed to es-
trange ?

That here at once his soul put by
All gifts of time and change,
And left us heavier hearts to sigh
' Was life so strange ? '

VI.

Angel by name love called him, seeing so fair
The sweet small frame !
Meet to be called, if ever man's child were,
Angel by name.

Rose-bright and warm from heaven's own
heart he came,
And might not bear
The cloud that covers earth's wan face with
shame.

His little light of life was all too rare
 And soft a flame:
 Heaven yearned for him till angels hailed
 him there
 Angel by name.

VII.

The song that smiled upon his birthday here
 Weeps on the grave that holds him undefiled
 Whose loss makes bitterer than a soundless
 tear

The song that smiled.

His name crowned once the mightiest ever
 styled

Sovereign of arts, and angel: fate and fear
 Knew then their master, and were reconciled

But we saw born beneath some tenderer
 sphere

Michael, an angel and a little child,
 Whose loss bows down to weep upon his bier
 The song that smiled.

ONE OF TWAIN.

I.

ONE of twain, twin-born with flowers that
 waken,
 Now hath passed from sense of sun and rain :
 Wind from off the flower-crowned branch
 hath shaken
 One of twain.

One twin flower must pass, and one remain :
 One, the word said soothly, shall be taken,
 And another left : can death refrain ?

Two years since was love's light song mis-
 taken,
 Blessing then both blossoms, half in vain ?
 Night outspeeding light hath overtaken
 One of twain.

Night and light ? O thou of heart unwary,
 Love, what knowest thou here at all aright,
 Lured, abused, misled as men by fairy
 Night and light ?

Haply, where thine eyes behold but night,
 Soft as o'er her babe the smile of Mary
 Light breaks flowerwise into new-born sight.

What though night of light to thee be chary ?
 What though stars of hope like flowers take
 flight ?

Seest thou all things here, where all see vary
 Night and light ?

DEATH AND BIRTH.

DEATH and birth should dwell not near to-
 gether :

Wealth keeps house not, even for shame, with
 dearth :

Fate doth ill to link in one brief tether
 Death and birth.

Harsh the yoke that binds them, strange the
 girth

Seems that girds them each with each: yet
 whether

Death be best, who knows, or life on earth ?

Ill the rose-red and the sable feather

Blend in one crown's plume, as grief with
 mirth :

Ill met still are warm and wintry weather,
 Death and birth.

BIRTH AND DEATH.

BIRTH and death, twin-sister and twin-brother,
 Night and day, on all things that draw breath,
 Reign, while time keeps friends with one
 another

Birth and death.

Each brow-bound with flowers diverse of
 wreath,

Heaven they hail as father. earth as mother,
 Faithful found above them and beneath.

Smiles may lighten tears, and tears may
 smother

Smiles, for all that joy or sorrow saith :
 Joy nor sorrow knows not from each other
 Birth and death.

BENEDICTION.

BLEST in death and life beyond man's guessing
 Little children live and die, possess
 Still of grace that keeps them past expressing
 Blest.

Each least chirp that rings from every nest,
Each least touch of flower-soft fingers pressing
Aught that yearns and trembles to be prest,

Each least glance, gives gifts of grace, re-
dressing
Grief's worst wrongs : each mother's nurturing
breast
Feeds a flower of bliss, beyond all blessing
Blest.

ETUDE RÉALISTE.

I.

A BABY'S feet, like sea-shells pink,
Might tempt, should heaven see meet,
An angel's lips to kiss, we think,
A baby's feet.

Like rose-hued sea-flowers toward the heat
They stretch and spread and wink
Their ten soft buds that part and meet.

No flower-bells that expand and shrink
Gleam half so heavenly sweet
As shine on life's untrodden brink
A baby's feet

II.

A baby's hands, like rosebuds furred,
Whence yet no leaf expands,
Ope if you touch, though close upcurled,
A baby's hands.

Then, even as warriors grip their brands
When battle's bolt is hurled,
They close, clenched hard like tightening
bands.

No rosebuds yet by dawn imperaled
Match, even in loveliest lands,
The sweetest flowers in all the world—
A baby's hands.

III.

A baby's eyes, ere speech begin
Ere lips learn words or sighs,
Bless all things bright enough to win
A baby's eyes.

Love, while the sweet thing laughs and lies,
And sleep flows out and in,
Lies perfect in them Paradise.

Their glance might cast out pain and sin,
Their speech make dumb the wise,
By mute glad godhead felt within
A baby's eyes.

BABYHOOD.

I.

A BABY shines as bright
If winter or if May be
On eyes that keep in sight
A baby.

Though dark the skies or gray be,
It fills our eyes with light,
If midnight or midday be.

Love hails it, day and night,
The sweetest thing that may be,
Yet cannot praise aright
A baby.

II.

All heaven, in every baby born,
All absolute of earthly leaven,
Reveals itself, tho' man may scorn
All heaven.

Yet man might feel all sin forgiven,
All grief appeased, all pain outworn,
By this one revelation given.

Soul, now forgot thy burdens borne:
Heart, be thy joys now seven times seven:
Love shows in light more bright than morn
All heaven.

III.

What likeness may define, and stay not
From truth's exactest way,
A baby's beauty? Love can say not
What likeness may.

The Mayflower loveliest held in May
Of all that shine and stay not
Laughs not in rosier disarray.

Sleek satin, swansdown, buds that play not
As yet with winds that play,
Would fain be matched with this, and may
not:
What likeness may?

IV.

Rose, round whose bed
Dawn's cloudlets close
Earth's brightest-bred
Rose !

No song, love knows,
May praise the head
Your curtain shows.

Ere sleep has fled,
The whole child glows
One sweet live red
Rose

FIRST FOOTSTEPS

A LITTLE way, more soft and sweet
Than fields aflower with May,
A babe's feet, venturing, scarce complete
A little way.

Eyes full of dawning day
Look up for mother's eyes to meet,
Too blithe for song to say.

Glad as the golden spring to greet
Its first live leaflet's play,
Love, laughing, leads the little feet
A little way.

A NINTH BIRTHDAY.

FEBRUARY 4, 1883.

I.

THREE times thrice hath winter's rough white
wing
Crossed and curdled wells and streams with
ice
Since his birth whose praises love would sing
Three times thrice.

Earth nor sea bears flower nor pearl of price
Fit to crown the forehead of my king.
Honey meet to please him, balm, nor spice.

Love can think of nought but love to bring
Fit to serve or do him sacrifice
Ere his eyes have looked upon the spring
Three times thrice.

II.

Three times thrice the world has fallen on
slumber,
Shone and waned and withered in a trice,
Frost has fettered Thames and Tyne and
Humber

Three times thrice,

Fogs have swoln too thick for steel to slice,
Cloud and mud have soiled with grime and
umber

Earth and heaven, defaced as souls with vice,

Winds have risen to wreck, snows fallen to
cumber.

Ships and chariots, trapped like rats or mice,
Since my king first smiled, whose years now
number

Three times thrice.

III.

Three times thrice, in wine of song full-flow-
ing,
Pledge, my heart, the child whose eyes
suffice,

Once beheld, to set thy joy-bells going
Three times thrice.

Not the lands of palm and date and rice
Glow more bright when summer leaves them
glowing,
Laugh more light when suns and winds entice.

Noon and eve and midnight and cock-crowing,
Child whose love makes life as paradise,
Love should sound your praise with clarions
blowing

Three times thrice.

NOT A CHILD.

I.

'Not a child. I call myself a boy,'
Says my king, with accent stern yet mild,
Now nine years have brought him change of
joy ;

'Not a child.'

How could reason be so far beguiled,
Err so far from sense's safe employ,
Stray so wide of truth, or run so wild ?

Seeing his face bent over book or toy,
 Child I called him, smiling : but he smiled
 Back, as one too high for vain annoy—
 Not a child.

II.

Not a child ? alack the year !
 What should ail an undefiled
 Heart, that he would fain appear
 Not a child ?

Men, with years and memories piled
 Each on other, far and near,
 Fain again would so be styled :

Fain would cast off hope and fear,
 Rest, forget, be reconciled :
 Why would you so fain be, dear,
 Not a child ?

III.

Child or boy, my darling, which you will,
 Still your praise finds heart and song employ,
 Heart and song both yearning toward you still,
 Child or boy.

All joys else might sooner pall or cloy
 Love than this which inly takes its fill,
 Dear, of sight of your more perfect joy.

Nay, be aught you please, let all fulfil
 All your pleasure ; be your world your toy :
 Mild or wild we love you, loud or still,
 Child or boy.

TO DORA DORIAN.

CHILD of two strong nations, heir
 Born of high-souled hope that smiled
 Seeing for each brought forth a fair
 Child,

By thy gracious brows, and wild
 Golden-clouded heaven of hair,
 By thine eyes elate and mild,

Hope would fain take heart to swear
 Men should yet be reconciled,
 Seeing the sign she bids thee bear,
 Child.

THE ROUNDEL.

A ROUNDEL is wrought as a ring or a star-
 bright sphere,
 With craft of delight and with cunning of
 sound unsought,
 That the heart of the hearer may smile if to
 pleasure his ear
 A roundel is wrought.

Its jewel of music is carven of all or of
 aught—
 Love, laughter or mourning—remembrance of
 rapture or fear—
 That fancy may fashion to hang in the ear of
 thought.

As a bird's quick song runs round, and the
 hearts in us hear
 Pause answer to pause, and again the same
 strain caught,
 So moves the device whence, round as a pearl
 or tear,
 A roundel is wrought.

AT SEA.

' FAREWELL and adieu ' was the burden pre-
 vailing
 Long since in the chant of a home-faring
 crew ;
 And the heart in us echoes, with laughing or
 wailing,
 Farewell and adieu.

Each year that we live shall we sing it anew,
 With a water untravelled before us for sailing
 And a water behind us that wrecks may be-
 strew.

The stars of the past and the beacons are
 paling,
 The heavens and the waters are hoarier of hue ;
 But the heart in us chants not an all unavail-
 ing
 Farewell and adieu.

WASTED LOVE.

WHAT shall be done for sorrow
 With love whose race is run ?
 Where help is none to borrow,
 What shall be done ?

In vain his hands have spun
The web, or drawn the furrow:
No rest their toil hath won.

His task is all gone thorough,
And fruit thereof is none:
And who dare say to-morrow
What shall be done?

BEFORE SUNSET.

Love's twilight wanes in heaven above,
On earth ere twilight reigns:
Ere fear may feel the chill thereof,
Love's twilight wanes.

Ere yet the insatiate heart complains
'Too much, and scarce enough,'
The lip so late athirst refrains.

Soft on the neck of either dove
Love's hands let slip the reins:
And while we look for light of love
Love's twilight wanes.

A SINGING LESSON.

FAR-FETCHED and dear-bought, as the proverb rehearses,
Is good, or was held so, for ladies; but nought
In a song can be good if the turn of the verse is
Far-fetched and dear-bought.

As the turn of a wave should it sound, and the thought
Ring smooth, and as light as the spray that disperses
Be the gleam of the words for the garb thereof wrought.

Let the soul in it shine through the sound as it pierces
Men's hearts with possession of music unsought.
For the bounties of song are no jealous god's mercies,
Far-fetched and dear-bought.

FLOWER-PIECES.

I.

LOVE LIES BLEEDING.

Love lies bleeding in the bed whereover
Roses lean with smiling mouths or pleading:
Earth lies laughing where the sun's dart clove her:
Love lies bleeding.

Stately shine his purple plumes, exceeding
Pride of princess; nor shall maid or lover
Find on earth a fairer sign worth heeding.

Yet may love, sore wounded, scarce recover
Strength and spirit again, with life receding:
Hope and joy, wind-winged, about him hover:
Love lies bleeding.

II.

LOVE IN A MIST.

Light love in a mist, by the midsummer moon
misguided,
Scarce seen in the twilight garden if gloom
insist,
Seems vainly to seek for a star whose gleam
has derided
Light love in a mist.

All day in the sun, when the breezes do all
they list,
His soft blue raiment of cloudlike blossom
abided
Unrent and unwithered of winds and of rays
that kissed.

Blithe-hearted or sad, as the cloud or the sun
subsidied,
Love smiled in the flower with a meaning
whereof none wist
Save two that beheld, as a gleam that before
them glided,
Light love in a mist.

THREE FACES.

I.

VENTIMIGLIA.

THE sky and sea glared hard and bright and
blank:
Down the one steep street, with slow steps
firm and free

A tall girl paced, with eyes too proud to thank
The sky and sea.

One dead flat sapphire, void of wrath or glee,
Through bay on bay shone blind from bank to
bank

The weary Mediterranean, drear to see.

More deep, more living, shone her eyes that
drank

The breathless light and shed again on me,
Till pale before their splendor waned and
shrank

The sky and sea.

II.

GENOA.

Again the same strange might of eyes, that
saw

In heaven and earth nought fairer, overcame
My sight with rapture of reiterate awe,
Again the same.

The self-same pulse of wonder shook like
flame

The spirit of sense within me: what strange
law

Had bid this be, for blessing or for blame?

To what veiled end that fate or chance foresaw
Came forth this second sister face, that came
Absolute, perfect, fair, without a flaw,
Again the same?

III.

VENICE.

Out of the dark pure twilight, where the
stream

Flows glimmering, streaked by many a birdlike
bark

That skims the gloom whence towers and
bridges gleam
Out of the dark,

Once more a face no glance might choose
but mark

Shone pale and bright, with eyes whose deep
slow beam

Made quick the twilight, lifeless else and
stark.

The same it seemed, or mystery made it
seem,

As those before beholden; but St. Mark
Ruled here the ways that showed it like a
dream

Out of the dark.

EROS.

I.

EROS, from rest in isles far-famed,
With rising Anthesterion rose,
And all Hellenic heights acclaimed
Eros.

The sea one pearl, the shore one rose,
All round him all the flower-month flamed
And lightened, laughing off repose.

Earth's heart, sublime and unashamed,
Knew, even perchance as man's heart knows,
The thirst of all men's nature named
Eros.

II.

Eros. a fire of heart untamed,
A light of spirit in sense that glows,
Flamed heavenward still ere earth defamed
Eros.

Nor fear nor shame durst curb or close
His golden godhead, marred and maimed,
Fast round with bends that burnt and froze.

Ere evil faith struck blind and lamed
Love, pure as fire or flowers or snows,
Earth hailed as blameless and unblamed
Eros.

III.

Eros, with shafts by thousands aimed
At laughing lovers round in rows,
Fades from their sight whose tongues pro-
claimed
Eros.

But higher than transient shapes or shows
The light of love in life inflamed
Spring toward no goal that these disclose.

Above those heavens which passion claimed
Shines, veiled by change that ebbs and flows,
The soul in all things born or framed,
Eros.

SORROW.

SORROW, on wing through the world forever,
Here and there for awhile would borrow
Rest, if rest might haply deliver
Sorrow.

One thought lies close in her heart gnawn
through
With pain, a weed in a dried up-river,
A rust-red share in an empty furrow.
Hearts that strain at her chain would sever
The link where yesterday frets to-morrow!
All things pass in the world, but never
Sorrow.

SLEEP.

SLEEP, when a soul that her own clouds cover
Wails that sorrow should always keep
Watch, nor see in the gloom above her
Sleep.

Down, through darkness naked and steep,
Sinks, and the wings of his comforts cover
Close the soul, though her wound be deep.

God beloved of us, all men's lover,
All most weary that smile or weep
Feel thee afar or anear them hover,
Sleep.

ON AN OLD ROUNDEL.

Translated by D. G. Rossetti from the French of Villon.

I.

DEATH, from thy rigor a voice appealed,
And men still hear what the sweet cry saith,
Crying aloud in thine ears . . . led,
Death.

As a voice in a vision that vanisheth,
Through the grave's gate barred and the
portal steeled
The sound of the wail of it travelleth.

Wailing aloud from a heart unhealed,
It woke response of melodious breath
From lips now too by thy kiss congealed,
Death.

II.

Ages ago, from the lips of a sad glad poet
Whose soul was a wild dove lost in the whirl-
ing snow,
The soft keen plaint of his pain took voice to
show it
Ages ago.

So clear, so deep, the divine drear accents
flow,
No soul that listens may choose but thrill to
know it,
Pierced and wrung by the passionate music's
throes.

For us there murmurs a nearer voice below it,
Known once of ears that never again shall
know
Nor mute as the mouth which felt death's
wave o'erflow it
Ages ago.

A LANDSCAPE BY COURBET.

Low lies the mere beneath the moorside, still
And glad of silence : down the wood sweeps
clear
To the soft verge where fed with many a rill
Low lies the mere.

The wind speaks only summer : eye nor ear
Sees aught at all of dark, hears aught of shrill,
From sound or shadow felt or fancied here.

Strange, as we praise the dead man's might
and skill,
Strange that harsh thoughts should make such
heavy cheer,
While, clothed with peace by heaven's most
gentle will,
Low lies the mere.

A FLOWER-PIECE BY FANTIN.

HEART'S EASE or pansy, pleasure or thought,
Which would the picture give us of these?
Surely the heart that conceived it sought
Heart's ease.

Surely by glad and divine degrees
The heart impelling the hand that wrought
Wrought comfort here for a soul's disease.

Deep flowers, with lustre and darkness fraught,
From glass that gleams as the chill still seas
Lean and lend for a heart distraught
Heart's ease.

A NIGHT-PIECE BY MILLET.

WIND and sea and cloud and cloud-forsaking
Mirth of moonlight where the storm leaves
free

Heaven awhile, for all the wrath of waking
Wind and sea.

Bright with glad mad rapture, fierce with glee,
Laughs the moon, born on past cloud's o'er-
taking
Fast, it seems, as wind or sail can flee.

One blown sail beneath her, hardly making
Forth, wild-winged for harborage yet to be
Strives and leaps and pants beneath the break-
ing

Wind and sea.

'MARZO PAZZO.'

MAD March, with the wind in his wings wide-
spread,
Leaps from heaven, and the deep dawn's arch
Hails re-risen again from the dead
Mad March.

Soft small flames on rowan and larch
Break forth as laughter on lips that said
Naught till the pulse in them beat love's
march.

But the heartbeat now in the lips rose-red
Speaks life to the world, and the winds that
parch
Bring April forth as a bride to wed
Mad March.

DEAD LOVE.

DEAD love, by treason slain, lies stark,
White as a dead stark-stricken dove :
None that pass by him pause to mark
Dead love.

His heart, that strained and yearned and
strove

As toward the sundawn strives the lark,
Is cold as all the old joy thereof.

Dead men, re-risen from dust, may hark
When rings the trumpet blown above :
It will not raise from out the dark
Dead love.

DISCORD.

UNRECONCILED by life's fleet years, that fled
With changeful clang of pinions wide and wild,
Though two great spirits had lived, and hence
had sped

Unreconciled ;

Though time and change, harsh time's impe-
rious child,
That wed strange hands together, might not
wed

High hearts by hope's misprision once be-
guiled ;

Faith, by the ligh from either's memory shed,
Sees, radiant as their ends were undefiled,
One goal for each—not twain among the dead
Unreconciled.

CONCORD.

RECONCILED by death's mild hand, that giving
Peace gives wisdom, not more strong than
mild,
Love beholds them, each without misgiving
Reconciled.

Each on earth alike of earth reviled,
Hated, feared, derided, and forgiving,
Each alike had heaven at heart, and smiled.

Both bright names, clothed round with man's
thanksgiving ;
Shine, twin stars above the storm-drifts piled,
Dead and deathless, whom we saw not living
Reconciled.

MOURNING.

ALAS my brother ! the cry of the mourners of
old
That cried on each other

All crying aloud on the dead as the death-note rolled,

Alas my brother!

As flashes of dawn that mists from an east wind smother

With fold upon fold,

The past years gleam that linked us one with another.

'Time sunders hearts as of brethren whose eyes behold

No more their mother :

But a cry sounds yet from the shrine whose fires wax cold,

Alas my brother!

APEROTOS EROS.

STRONG as death, and cruel as the grave,
Clothed with cloud and tempest's blackening breath,

Known of death's dread self, whom none outbrave,

Strong as death,

Love, brow-bound with anguish for a wraith,
Fierce with pain, a tyrant-hearted slave,
Burns above a world that groans beneath.

Hath not pity power on thee to save,
Love? hath power no pity? Nought he saith,
Answering : blind he walks as wind or wave,
Strong as death.

TO CATULLUS.

My brother, my Valerius, dearest head
Of all whose crowning bay-leaves crown their mother,
Rome, in the notes first heard of thine I read
My brother.

No dust that death or time can strew may smother

Love and the sense of kinship inly bred
From loves and hates at one with one another.

To thee was Cæsar's self nor dear nor dread,
Song and the sea were sweeter each than other :

How should I living fear to call thee dead
My brother?

'INSULARUM OCELLE.'

SARK, fairer than aught in the world than the lit skies cover,

Laughs inly behind her cliffs, and the sea-farers mark

As a shrine where the sunlight serves, though the blown clouds hover,
Sark.

We mourn, for love of a song that outsang the lark,

That nought so lovely beholden of Sirmio's lover

Made glad in Propontis the flight of his Pontic bark.

Here earth lies lordly, triumphal as heaven is above her,

And splendid and strange as the sea that upbears as an ark,

As a sign for the rapture of storm-spent eyes to discover,
Sark.

IN SARK.

ABREAST and ahead of the sea is a crag's front cloven asunder

With strong sea-breach and with wasting of winds whence terror is shed

As a shadow of death from the wings of the darkness on waters that thunder

Abreast and ahead.

At its edge is a sepulchre hollowed and hewn for a lone man's bed,

Propped open with rock and agape on the sky and the sea thereunder,

But roofed and walled in well from the wrath of them slept its dead.

Here might not a man drink rapture of rest, or delight above wonder.

Beholding, a soul disembodied, the days and the nights that fled,

With splendor and sound of the tempest around and above him and under,

Abreast and ahead?

IN GUERNSEY.

I.

THE heavenly bay, ringed round with cliffs and moors,

Storm-stained ravines, and crags that lawns inlay,

Soothes as with love the rocks whose guard
secures
The heavenly bay.

O friend, shall time take ever this away,
This blessing given of beauty that endures,
This glory shown us, not to pass but stay?

Though sight be changed for memory, love
ensures
What memory, changed by love to sight,
would say—
The word that seals forever mine and yours
The heavenly bay.

II.

My mother sea, my fustress, what new strand,
What new delight of waters, may this be,
The fairest found since time's first breezes
fanned
My mother sea?

Once more I give me body and soul to thee,
Who hast my soul forever : cliff and sand
Recede, and heart to heart once more are we.

My heart springs first and plunges, ere my
hand
Strike out from shore : more close it brings
to me,
More near and dear than seems my father-
land,
My mother sea.

III.

Across and along, as the bay's breadth
opens, and o'er us
Wild autumn exults in the wind, swift rapt-
ure and strong
Impels us, and broader the wide waves
brighten before us
Across and along.

The whole world's heart is uplifted, and knows
not wrong ;
The whole world's life is a chant to the sea-
tide's chorus ;
Are we not as waves of the water, as notes
of the song ?

Like children unworn of the passions and
toils that wore us,
We breast for a season the breadth of the
seas that throng,
Rejoicing as they, to be borne as of old they
bore us
Across and along.

IV.

On Dante's track by some funereal spell
Drawn down through desperate ways that
lead not back
We seem to move, bound forth past flood and
fell
On Dante's track.

The gray path ends: the gaunt rocks gape:
the black
Deep hollow tortuous night, a soundless shell,
Glares darkness: are the fires of old grown
slack ?

Nay, then, what flames are these that leap
and swell
As 'twere to show, where earth's foundations
crack,
The secrets of the sepulchres of hell
On Dante's track?

V.

By mere men's hands the flame was lit, we
know,
From heaps of dry waste whin and casual
brands:
Yet, knowing, we scarce believe it kindled
so
By mere men's hands.

Above, around, high-vaulted hell expands,
Steep, dense, a labyrinth walled and roofed
with woe
Whose mysteries even itself not understands.

The scorn in Farinata's eyes aglow
Seems visible in this flame : there Geryon
stands:
No stage of earth's is here, set forth to show
By mere men's hands.

VI.

Night, in utmost noon forlorn and strong, with
heart athirst and fasting,
Hungers here, barred up forever, whence as
one whom dreams affright
Day recoils before the low-browed lintel threat-
ening doom and casting
Night.

All the reefs and islands, all the lawns and
highlands, clothed with light,
Laugh for love's sake in their sleep outside:
but here the night speaks, blasting
Day with silent speech and scorn of all things
known from depth to height

Lower than dive the thoughts of spirit-
stricken fear in souls forecasting
Hell, the deep void seems to yawn fear's
reach, and higher than sight
Rise the walls and roofs that compass it
about with everlasting
Night.

VII.

The house accurst, with cursing sealed and
signed,
Heeds not what storms about it burn and
burst:
Not fear more fearful than its own may find
The house accurst.

Barren as crime, anhungered and athirst,
Blank miles of moor sweep inland, sere and
blind,
Where summer's best rebukes not winter's
worst.

The low bleak tower with nought save wastes
behind
Stares down the abyss whereon chance reared
and nursed

This type and likeness of the accurst man's
mind,
The house accurst.

VIII.

Beloved and blest, lit warm with love and
fame,
The house that had the light of the earth for
guest
Hears for his name's sake all men hail its
name
Beloved and blest.

This eyrie was the homeless eagle's nest
When storm laid waste his eyrie: hence he
came
Again when storm smote sore his mother's
breast.

Bow down men bade us, or be clothed with
blame
And mocked for madness: worst, they sware,
was best
But grief shone here, while joy was one with
shame,
Beloved and blest.

C.

ENVOI.

FLY, white butterflies, out to sea,
Frail pale wings for the winds to try,
Small white wings that we scarce can see,
Fly.

Here and there may a chance-caught
eye

Note in a score of you twain or three
Brighter or darker of mould or dye.

Some fly light as a laugh of glee,
Some fly soft as a low long sigh;
All to the haven where each would be,
Fly.

ASTROPHEL.

AFTER READING SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S ARCADIA IN THE GARDEN OF AN OLD ENGLISH MANOR
HOUSE.

I.

A STAR in the silence that follows
The song of the death of the sun
Speaks music in heaven, and the hollows
And heights of the world are as one;
One lyre that outtings and outlightens
The rapture of sunset, and thrills
Mute night till the sense of it brightens
The soul that it fills.

The flowers of the sun that is sunken
Hang heavy of heart as of head;
The bees that have eaten and drunken
The soul of their sweetness are fled;
But a sunflower of song, on whose
honey
My spirit has fed as a bee,
Makes sunnier than morning was sunny
The twilight for me.

The letters and lines on the pages

That sundered mine eyes and the flowers
Wax faint as the shadows of ages

That sunder their season and ours;
As the ghosts of the centuries that sever

A season of colourless time
From the days whose remembrance is ever,
As they were, sublime.

The season that bred and that cherished

The soul that I commune with yet,
Had it utterly withered and perished

To rise not again as it set,
Shame were it that Englishmen living
Should read as their forefathers read
The books of the praise and thanksgiving
Of Englishmen dead.

O light of the land that adored thee

And kindled thy soul with her breath,
Whose life, such as fate would afford thee,
Was lovelier than aught but thy death,
By what name, could thy lovers but know it,
Might love of thee hail thee afar,
Philisides, Astrophel, poet
Whose love was thy star?

A star in the moondawn of Maytime,

A star in the cloudland of change;
Too splendid and sad for the daytime
To cheer or eclipse or estrange;
Too sweet for tradition or vision
To see but through shadows of tears
Rise deathless across the division
Of measureless years.

The twilight may deepen and harden

As nightward the stream of it runs
Till starshine transfigure a garden
Whose radiance responds to the sun's:
The light of the love of thee darkens
The lights that arise and that set:
The love that forgets thee not hearkens
If England forget.

II.

Bright and brief in the sight of grief and love
The light of thy lifetime shone,

Seen and felt by the gifts it dealt, the grace it
gave, and again was gone:

Ay, but now it is death, not thou, whom time
has conquered as years pass on.

Ay, not yet may the land forget that bore and
loved thee and praised and wept,
Sidney, lord of the stainless sword, the name
of names that her heart's love kept
Fast as thine did her own, a sign to light thy
life till it sank and slept.

Bright as then for the souls of men thy brave
Arcadia resounds and shines,
Lit with love that beholds above all joys and
sorrows the steadfast signs,
Faith, a splendour that hope makes tender,
and truth, whose presage the soul divines.

All the glory that girds the story of all thy life
as with sunlight round,
All the spell that on all souls fell who saw
thy spirit, and held them bound,
Lives for all that have heard the call and
cadence yet of its music sound.

Music bright as the soul of light, for wings an
eagle, for notes a dove,
Leaps and shines from the lustrous lines
wherethrough thy soul from afar above
Shone and sang till the darkness rang with
light whose fire is the fount of love.

Love that led thee alive, and fed thy soul with
sorrows and joys and fears,
Love that sped thee, alive and dead, to fame's
fair goal with thy peerless peers,
Feeds the flame of thy quenchless name with
light that lightens the rayless years.

Dark as sorrow though night and morrow
may lower with presage of clouded
fame,

How may she that of old bare thee, may Sid-
ney's England, be brought to shame?

How should this be, while England is? What
need of answer beyond thy name?

III.

From the love that transfigures thy glory,

From the light of the dawn of thy death,

The life of thy song and thy story
Took subtler and fierier breath.

And we, though the day and the morrow

Set fear and thanksgiving at strife,

Hail yet in the star of thy sorrow

The sun of thy life.

Shame and fear may beset men here, and bid
 thanksgiving and pride be dumb:
 Faith, discrowned of her praise, and wound
 about with toils till her life wax
 numb,
 Scarce may see if the sundawn be, if darkness
 die not and dayrise come.

But England, enmeshed and benetted
 With spiritless villainies round,
 With counsels of cowardice fretted,
 With trammels of treason enwound,
 Is yet, though the season be other
 Than wept and rejoiced over thee,
 Thine England, thy lover, thy mother,
 Sublime as the sea.

Hers wast thou: if her face be now less bright,
 or seem for an hour less brave,
 Let but thine on her darkness shine, thy
 saviour spirit revive and save,
 Time shall see, as the shadows flee, her shame
 entombed in a shameful grave.

If death and not life were the portal
 That opens on life at the last,
 If the spirit of Sidney were mortal
 And the past of it utterly past,
 Fear stronger than honour was ever,
 Forgetfulness mightier than fame,
 Faith knows not if England should never
 Subside into shame.

Yea, but yet is thy sun not set, thy sunbright
 spirit of trust withdrawn:
 England's love of thee burns above all hopes
 that darken or fears that fawn:
 Hers thou art: and the faithful heart that
 hopes begets upon darkness dawn.

The sunset that sunrise will follow
 Is less than the dream of a dream:
 The starshine on height and on hollow
 Sheds promise that dawn shall redeem:
 The night, if the daytime would hide it,
 Shows lovelier, aflame and afar,
 Thy soul and thy Stella's beside it,
 A star by a star.

A NYMPHOLEPT.

SUMMER, and noon, and a splendour of silence,
 felt,
 Seen, and heard of the spirit within the
 sense.

Soft through the frondage the shades of the
 sunbeams melt,
 Sharp through the foliage the shafts of
 them, keen and dense,
 Cleave, as discharged from the string of
 the God's bow, tense
 As a war-steed's girth, and bright as a war-
 rior's belt.
 Ah, why should an hour that is heaven
 for an hour pass hence?

I dare not sleep for delight of the perfect hour,
 Lest God be wroth that his gift should be
 scorned of man.

The face of the warm bright world is the face
 of a flower,

The word of the wind and the leaves that
 the light winds fan

As the word that quickened at first into
 flame, and ran,

Creative and subtle and fierce with invasive
 power,
 Through darkness and cloud, from the
 breath of the one God, Pan.

The perfume of earth possessed by the sun
 pervades

The chaster air that he soothes but with
 sense of sleep.

Soft, imminent, strong as desire that prevails
 and fades,

The passing noon that beholds not a
 cloudlet weep

Imbues and impregnates life with delight
 more deep

Than dawn or sunset or moonrise on lawns
 or glades

Can shed from the skies that receive it and
 may not keep.

The skies may hold not the splendour of sun-
 down fast;

It wanes into twilight as dawn dies down
 into day.

And the moon, triumphant when twilight is
 overpast,
 Takes pride but awhile in the hours of her
 stately sway.
 But the might of the noon, though the
 light of it pass away,
 Leaves earth fulfilled of desires and of dreams
 that last;
 But if any there be that hath sense of
 them none can say

For if any there be that hath sight of them,
 sense, or trust
 Made strong by the might of a vision, the
 strength of a dream,
 His lips shall straiten and close as a dead
 man's must,
 His heart shall be sealed as the voice of a
 frost-bound stream.
 For the deep mid mystery of light and of
 heat that seem
 To clasp and pierce dark earth, and enkindle
 dust,
 Shall a man's faith say what it is? or a
 man's guess deem?

Sleep lies not heavier on eyes that have
 watched all night
 Than hangs the heat of the noon on the
 hills and trees.
 Why now should the haze not open, and yield
 to sight
 A fairer secret than hope or than slumber
 sees?
 I seek not heaven with submission of lips
 and knees,
 With worship and prayer for a sign till it leap
 to light:
 I gaze on the gods about me, and call on
 these.

I call on the gods hard by, the divine dim
 powers
 Whose likeness is here at hand, in the
 breathless air,
 In the pulseless peace of the fervid and silent
 flowers,
 In the faint sweet speech of the waters
 that whisper there.
 Ah, what should darkness do in a world
 so fair?

The bent-grass heaves not, the couch-grass
 quails not or cowers;
 The wind's kiss frets not the rowan's or
 aspen's hair.

But the silence trembles with passion of sound
 suppressed,
 And the twilight quivers and yearns to the
 sunward, wrung
 With love as with pain; and the wide wood's
 motionless breast
 Is thrilled with a dumb desire that would
 fain find tongue
 And palpitates, tongueless as she whom
 a man-snake stung,
 Whose heart now heaves in the nightingale,
 never at rest
 Nor satiated ever with song till her last be
 sung.

Is it rapture or terror that circles me round,
 and invades
 Each vein of my life with hope—if it be
 not fear?
 Each pulse that awakens my blood into rap-
 ture fades,
 Each pulse that subsides into dread of a
 strange thing near
 Requickens with sense of a terror less
 dread than dear.

Is peace not one with light in the deep green
 glades
 Where summer at noonday slumbers?
 Is peace not here?

The tall thin stems of the firs, and the roof
 sublime
 That screens from the sun the floor of the
 steep still wood,
 Deep, silent, splendid, and perfect and calm
 as time,
 Stand fast as ever in sight of the night
 they stood,
 When night gave all that moonlight and
 dewfall could.

The dense ferns deepen, the moss glows warm
 as the thyme:
 The wild heath quivers about me: the
 world is good.

Is it Pan's breath, fierce in the tremulous
 maidenhair,
 That bids fear creep as a snake through
 the woodlands, felt
 In the leaves that it stirs not yet, in the mute
 bright air,
 In the stress of the uns? For here has
 the great God dwelt:

For hence were the shafts of his love or
his anger dealt.

For here has his wrath been fierce as his love
was fair,

When each was as fire to the darkness its
breath bade melt.

Is it love, is it dread, that enkindles the trem-
bling noon,

That yearns, reluctant in rapture that
fear has fed,

As man for woman, as woman for man?
Full soon,

If I live, and the life that may look on him
drop not dead,

Shall the ear that hears not a leaf quake
hear his tread,

The sense that knows not the sound of the
deep day's tune

Receive the God, be it love that he brings
or dread.

The naked noon is upon me: the fierce dumb
spell,

The fearful charm of the strong sun's
imminent might,

Unmerciful, steadfast, deeper than seas that
swell,

Pervades, invades, appals me with love-
less light,

With harsher awe than breathes in the
breath of night.

Have mercy, God who art all! For I know
thee well,

How sharp is thine eye to lighten, thine
hand to smite.

The whole wood feels thee, the whole air fears
thee: but fear

So deep, so dim, so sacred, is wellnigh
sweet.

For the light that hangs and broods on the
woodlands here,

Intense, invasive, intolerant, imperious,
and meet

To lighten the works of thine hands and
the ways of thy feet,

Is hot with the fire of the breath of thy life,
and dear

As hope that shrivels or shrinks not for
frost or heat.

Thee, thee the supreme dim godhead, ap-
proved afar,

Perceived of the soul and conceived of the
sense of man,

We scarce dare love, and we dare not fear:
the star

We call the sun, that lit us when life
began

To brood on the world that is thine by
his grace for a span,

Conceals and reveals in the semblance of
things that are

Thine imminent presence, the pulse of thy
heart's life, Pan.

The fierce mid noon that awakens and warms
the snake

Conceals thy mercy, reveals thy wrath:
and again

The dew-bright hour that assuages the twi-
light brake

Conceals thy wrath and reveals thy mercy:
then

Thou art fearful only for evil souls of
men

That feel with nightfall the serpent within
them wake,

And hate the holy darkness on glade and
glen.

Yea, then we know not and dream not if ill
things be,

Or if aught of the work of the wrong of
the world be thine.

We hear not the footfall of terror that treads
the sea,

We hear not the moan of winds that assail
the pine:

We see not if shipwreck reign in the
storm's dim shrine;

If death do service and doom bear witness
to thee

We see not,—know not if blood for thy
lips be wine.

But in all things evil and fearful that fear
may scan,

As in all things good, as in all things
fair that fall,

We know thee present and latent, the lord
of man;

In the murmuring of doves, in the clam-
ouring of winds that call

And wolves that howl for their prey; in
the midnight's pall,

In the naked and nymph-like feet of the
dawn, O Pan,
And in each life living, O thou the God who
art all.

Smiling and singing, wailing and wringing
of hands,
Laughing and weeping, watching and sleep-
ing, still

Proclaim but and prove but thee, as the
shifted sands

Speak forth and show but the strength
of the sea's wild will

That sifts and grinds them as grain in the
storm-wind's mill.

In thee is the doom that falls and the doom
that stands:

The tempests utter thy word, and the
stars fulfil.

Where Etna shudders with passion and pain
volcanic

That rend her heart as with anguish that
rends a man's,

Where Typho labours, and finds not his thews
Titanic,

In breathless torment that ever the flame's
breath fans,

Men felt and feared thee of old, whose
pastoral clans

Were given to the charge of thy keeping; and
soundless panic

Held fast the woodland whose depths and
whose heights were Pan's.

And here, though fear be less than delight,
and awe

Be one with desire and with worship of
earth and thee,

So mild seems now thy secret and speechless
law,

So fair and fearless and faithful and god-
like she,

So soft the spell of thy whisper on stream
and sea,

Yet man should fear lest he see what of old
men saw

And withered: yet shall I quail if thy
breath smite me.

Lord God of life and of light and of all things
fair,

Lord God of ravin and ruin and all things
dim,

Death seals up life, and darkens the sunbright
air,

And the stars that watch blind earth in
the deep night swim

Laugh, saying, 'What God is your God,
that ye call on him?

What is man, that the God who is guide of
our way should care

If day for a man be golden, or night be
grim?'

But thou, dost thou hear? Stars too but
abide for a span,

Gods too but endure for a season; but
thou, if thou be

God, more than shadows conceived and
adored of man,

Kind Gods and fierce, that bound him or
made him free,

The skies that scorn us are less in thy sight
than we,

Whose souls have strength to conceive and
perceive thee, Pan,

With sense more subtle than senses that
hear and see.

Yet may not it say, though it seek thee and
think to find

One soul of sense in the fire and the frost-
bound clod,

What heart is this, what spirit alive or blind,
That moves thee: only we know that the

ways we trod

We tread, with hands unguided, with feet
unshod,

With eyes unlightened; and yet, if with stead-
fast mind,

Perchance may we find thee and know
thee at last for God.

Yet then should God be dark as the dawn
is bright,

And bright as the night is dark on the
world—no more.

Light slays not darkness, and darkness ab-
sorbs not light;

And the labour of evil and good from
the years of yore

Is even as the labour of waves on a sun-
less shore.

And he who is first and last, who is depth and
height,

Keeps silence now, as the sun when the
woods wax hoar.

The dark dumb godhead innate in the fair
world's life

Imbues the rapture of dawn and of noon
with dread,

Infects the peace of the star-shod night with
strife,

Informs with terror the sorrow that guards
the dead.

No service of bended knee or of humbled
head

May soothe or subdue the God who has
change to wife:

And life with death is as morning with
evening wed.

And yet, if the light and the life in the light
that here

Seem soft and splendid and fervid as sleep
may seem

Be more than the shine of a smile or the flash
of a tear,

Sleep, change, and death are less than a
spell-struck dream,

And fear than the fall of a leaf on a starlit
stream.

And yet, if the hope that hath said it absorb
not fear,

What helps it man that the stars and the
waters gleam?

What helps it man, that the noon be indeed
intense,

The night be indeed worth worship? Fear
and pain

Were lords and masters yet of the secret sense,
Which now dares deem not that light is as

darkness, fain

Though dark dreams be to declare it, cry-
ing in vain.

For whence, thou God of the light and the
darkness, whence

Dawns now this vision that bids not the
sunbeams wane?

What light, what shadow, diviner than dawn
or night,

Draws near, makes pause, and again—
or I dream—draws near?

More soft than shadow. more strong than
the strong sun's light,

More pure than moonbeams—yea, but the
rays run sheer

As fire from the sun through the dusk
of the pinewood, clear

And constant; yea, but the shadow itself is
bright

That the light clothes round with love that
is one with fear.

Above and behind it the noon and the wood-
land lie,

Terrible, radiant with mystery, superb and
subdued,

Triumphant in silence; and hardly the sacred
sky

Seems free from the tyrannous weight of
the dumb fierce mood

Which rules as with fire and invasion of
beams that brood

The breathless rapture of earth till its hour
pass by

And leave her spirit released and her peace
renewed.

I sleep not: never in sleep has a man beholden
This. From the shadow that trembles

and yearns with light

Suppressed and elate and reluctant—obscure
and golden

As water kindled with presage of dawn or
night—

A form, a face, a wonder to sense and
sight,

Grows great as the moon through the month;
and her eyes embolden

Fear, till it change to desire, and desire to
delight.

I sleep not: sleep would die of a dream so
strange;

A dream so sweet would die as a rainbow
dies,

As a sunbow laughs and is lost on the waves
that range

And reck not of light that flickers or spray
that flies.

But the sun withdraws not, the woodland
shrinks not or sighs,

No sweet thing sickens with sense or with
fear of change;

Light wounds not, darkness blinds not,
my steadfast eyes.

Only the soul in my sense that receives the
soul

Whence now my spirit is kindled with
breathless bliss

Knows well if the light that wounds it with
 love makes whole,
 If hopes that carol be louder than fears
 that hiss,
 If truth be spoken of flowers and of waves
 that kiss,
 Of clouds and stars that contend for a sun-
 bright goal.
 And yet may I dream that I dream not
 indeed of this?

An earth-born dreamer, constrained by the
 bonds of birth,
 Held fast by the flesh, compelled by his
 veins that beat
 And kindle to rapture or wrath, to desire or
 to mirth,
 May hear not surely the fall of immortal
 feet,
 May feel not surely if heaven upon earth
 be sweet;
 And here is my sense fulfilled of the joys of
 earth,
 Light, silence, bloom, shade, murmur of
 leaves that meet.

Bloom, fervour, and perfume of grasses and
 flowers aglow,
 Breathe and brighten about me: the dark-
 ness gleams,
 The sweet light shivers and laughs on the
 slopes below,
 Made soft by leaves that lighten and
 change like dreams;
 The silence thrills with the whisper of
 secret streams
 That well from the heart of the woodland:
 these I know:
 Earth bore them, heaven sustained them
 with showers and beams.

I lean my face to the heather, and drink the
 sun
 Whose flame-lit odour satiates the flowers:
 mine eyes
 Close, and the goal of delight and of life is
 one:
 No more I crave of earth or her kindred
 skies.

No more? But the joy that springs from
 them smiles and flies:
 The sweet work wrought of them surely, the
 good work done,
 If the mind and the face of the season be
 loveless, dies.

Thee, therefore, thee would I come to, cleave
 to, cling,
 If haply thy heart be kind and thy gifts
 be good,
 Unknown sweet spirit, whose vesture is soft
 in spring,
 In summer splendid, in autumn pale as
 the wood
 That shudders and wanes and shrinks as
 a shamed thing should,
 In winter bright as the mail of a war-worn
 king
 Who stands where foes fled far from the
 face of him stood.

My spirit or thine is it, breath of thy life or
 of mine,
 Which fills my sense with a rapture that
 casts out fear?
 Pan's dim frown wanes, and his wild eyes
 brighten as thine,
 Transformed as night or as day by the
 kindling year.
 Earth-born, or mine eye were withered
 that sees, mine ear
 That hears were stricken to death by the
 sense divine,
 Earth-born I know thee: but heaven is
 about me here.

The terror that whispers in darkness and
 flames in light,
 The doubt that speaks in the silence of
 earth and sea,
 The sense, more fearful at noon than in mid-
 most night,
 Of wrath scarce hushed and of imminent
 ill to be,
 Where are they? Heaven is as earth,
 and as heaven to me
 Earth: for the shadows that sundered them
 here take flight;
 And nought is all, as am I, but a dream
 of thee.

ON THE SOUTH COAST.

TO THEODORE WATTS.

HILLS and valleys where April rallies his
radiant squadron of flowers and birds,
Steep strange beaches and lustrous reaches
of fluctuant sea that the land engirds,
Fields and downs that the sunrise crowns
with life diviner than lives in words,

Day by day of resurgent May salute the sun
with sublime acclaim,
Change and brighten with hours that lighten
and darken, girdled with cloud or flame;
Earth's fair face in alternate grace beams,
blooms, and lowers, and is yet the same.

Twice each day the divine sea's play makes
glad with glory that comes and goes
Field and street that her waves keep sweet,
when past the bounds of their old repose,
Fast and fierce in renewed reverse, the foam-
flecked estuary ebbs and flows.

Broad and bold through the stays of old staked
fast with trunks of the wildwood tree,
Up from shoreward, impelled far forward, by
marsh and meadow, by lawn and lea,
Inland still at her own wild will swells, rolls,
and revels the surging sea.

Strong as time, and as faith sublime,—clothed
round with shadows of hopes and fears,
Nights and morrows, and joys and sorrows,
alive with passion of prayers and tears,—
Stands the shrine that has seen decline eight
hundred waxing and waning years.

Tower set square to the storms of air and
change of season that glooms and glows,
Wall and roof of it tempest-proof, and equal
ever to suns and snows,
Bright with riches of radiant niches and pil-
lars smooth as a straight stem grows.

Aisle and nave that the whelming wave of
time has whelmed not or touched or
neared,

Arch and vault without stain or fault, by
hands of craftsmen we know not reared,
Time beheld them, and time was quelled;
and change passed by them as one that
feared.

Time that flies as a dream, and dies as dreams
that die with the sleep they feed,
Here alone in a garb of stone incarnate stands
as a god indeed,
Stern and fair, and of strength to bear all
burdens mortal to man's frail seed.

Men and years are as leaves or tears that
storm or sorrow is fain to shed:
These go by as the winds that sigh, and none
takes note of them quick or dead:
Time, whose breath is their birth and death,
folds here his pinions, and bows his head.

Still the sun that beheld begun the work
wrought here of unwearied hands
Sees, as then, though the Red King's men
held ruthless rule over lawless lands,
Stand their massive design, impassive, pure
and proud as a virgin stands.

Statelier still as the years fulfil their count,
subversing her sacred state,
Grows the hoary grey church whose story
silence utters and age makes great:
Statelier seems it than shines in dreams the
face unveiled of unvanquished fate.

Fate, more high than the star-shown sky,
more deep than waters unsounded, shines
Keen and far as the final star on souls that
seek not for charms or signs;
Yet more bright is the love-shown light of
men's hands lighted in songs or shrines.

Love and trust that the grave's deep dust can
soil not, neither may fear put out,
Witness yet that their record set stands fast,
though years be as hosts in rout,
Spent and slain; but the signs remain that
beat back darkness and cast forth doubt.

Men that wrought by the grace of thought
and toil things goodlier than praise dare
trace,

Fair as all that the world may call most fair,
save only the sea's own face,
Shrines or songs that the world's change
wrong not, live by grace of their own
gift's grace.

Dead, their names that the night reclaims—
 alive, their works that the day relumes—
 Sink and stand, as in stone and sand engraven:
 none may behold their tombs:

Nights and days shall record their praise
 while here this flower of their grafting
 blooms.

Flower more fair than the sun-thrilled air
 bids laugh and lighten and wax and rise,
 Fruit more bright than the fervent light sus-
 tains with strength from the kindled skies,
 Flower and fruit that the deathless root of
 man's love rears though the man's name
 dies.

Stately stands it, the work of hands unknown
 of: statelier, afar and near,
 Rise around it the heights that bound our
 landward gaze from the seaboard here;
 Downs that swerve and aspire, in curve and
 change of heights that the dawn holds
 dear.

Dawn falls fair on the grey walls there con-
 fronting dawn, on the low green lea,
 Lone and sweet as for fairies' feet held sacred,
 silent and strange and free,
 Wild and wet with its rills; but yet more fair
 falls dawn on the fairer sea.

Eastward, round by the high green bound of
 hills that fold the remote fields in,
 Strive and shine on the low sea-line fleet
 waves and beams when the days begin;
 Westward glow, when the days burn low, the
 sun that yields and the stars that win.

Rose-red eve on the seas that heave sinks
 fair as dawn when the first ray peers;
 Winds are glancing from sunbright Lancing
 to Shoreham, crowned with the grace of
 years;
 Shoreham, clad with the sunset, glad and
 grave with glory that death reveres.

Death, more proud than the kings' heads
 bowed before him, stronger than all
 things, bows

Here his head: as if death were dead, and
 kingship plucked from his crownless
 brows,

Life hath here such a face of cheer as change
 appals not and time avows.

Skies fulfilled with the sundown, stilled and
 splendid, spread as a flower that spreads,
 Pave with rarer device and fairer than
 heaven's the luminous oyster-beds,
 Grass-embanked, and in square plots ranked,
 inlaid with gems that the sundown sheds.

Squares more bright and with lovelier light
 than heaven that kindled it shines with
 shine

Warm and soft as the dome aloft, but heaven-
 lier yet than the sun's own shrine:
 Heaven is high, but the water-sky lit here
 seems deeper and more divine.

Flowers on flowers, that the whole world's
 bowers may show not, here may the sun-
 set show,
 Lightly graven in the waters paven with
 ghostly gold by the clouds aglow:
 Bright as love is the vault above, but love-
 lier lightens the wave below.

Rosy grey, or as fiery spray full-plumed, or
 greener than emerald, gleams
 Plot by plot as the skies allot for each its
 glory, divine as dreams
 Lit with fire of appeased desire which sounds
 the secret of all that seems;

Dreams that show what we fain would know,
 and know not save by the grace of
 sleep,
 Sleep whose hands have removed the bands
 that eyes long waking and fain to weep
 Feel fast bound on them—light around them
 strange, and darkness above them steep.

Yet no vision that heals division of love from
 love, and renews awhile
 Life and breath in the lips where death has
 quenched the spirit of speech and smile,
 Shews on earth, or in heaven's mid mirth,
 where no fears enter or doubts defile,

Aught more fair than the radiant air and
 water here by the twilight wed,
 Here made one by the waning sun whose last
 love quickens to rosebright red
 Half the crown of the soft high down that
 rears to northward its wood-girt head.

There, when day is at height of sway, men's
 eyes who stand, as we oft have stood,

High where towers with its world of flowers
the golden spinny that flanks the
wood,

See before and around them shore and sea-
board glad as their gifts are good.

Higher and higher to the north aspire the
green smooth-swelling unending downs;
East and west on the brave earth's breast
glow girdle-jewels of gleaming towns;
Southward shining, the lands declining sub-
side in peace that the sea's light
crowns.

Westward wide in its fruitful pride the plain
lies lordly with plenteous grace;

Fair as dawn's when the fields and lawns
desire her glitters the glad land's face:

Eastward yet is the sole sign set of elder days
and a lordlier race.

Down beneath us afar, where seethe in wilder
weather the tides aflow,

Hurled up hither and drawn down thither in
quest of rest that they may not know,

Still as dew on a flower the blue broad stream
now sleeps in the fields below.

Mild and bland in the fair green land it smiles,
and takes to its heart the sky;

Scarce the meads and the fens, the reeds and
grasses, still as they stand or lie,

Wear the palm of a statelier calm than rests
on waters that pass them by.

Yet shall these, when the winds and seas of
equal days and coequal nights

Rage, rejoice, and uplift a voice whose sound
is even as a sword that smites,

Felt and heard as a doomsman's word from
seaward reaches to landward heights,

Lift their heart up, and take their part of
triumph, swollen and strong with rage,

Rage elate with desire and great with pride
that tempest and storm assuage;

So their chime in the ear of time has rung
from age to rekindled age.

Fair and dear is the land's face here, and fair
man's work as a man's may be:

Dear and fair as the sunbright air is here the
record that speaks him free;

Free by birth of a sacred earth, and regent
ever of all the sea.

AN AUTUMN VISION.

OCTOBER 31, 1889.

Ζεφύρου γίγαντος αὐρά.

I.

Is it Midsummer here in the heavens that
illumine October on earth?

Can the year, when his heart is fulfilled with
desire of the days of his mirth,

Redeem them, recall, or remember?

For a memory recalling the rapture of earth,
and redeeming the sky,

Shines down from the heights to the depths:
will the watchword of dawn be July

When to-morrow acclaims November?

The stern salutation of sorrow to death or
repentance to shame

Was all that the season was wont to accord
her of grace or acclaim;

No lightnings of love and of laughter.

But here, in the laugh of the loud west wind
from around and above,

In the flash of the waters beneath him, what
sound or what light but of love

Rings round him or leaps forth after?

II.

Wind beloved of earth and sky and sea be-
yond all winds that blow,

Wind whose might in fight was England's
on her mightiest warrior day,

South-west wind, whose breath for her was
life, and fire to scourge her foe,

Steel to smite and death to drive him down
an unreturning way,

Well-beloved and welcome, sounding all the
clarions of the sky,

Rolling all the marshalled waters toward
the charge that storms the shore,

We receive, acclaim, salute thee, we who live
and dream and die,

As the mightiest mouth of song that ever
spake acclaimed of yore.

We that live as they that perish praise thee,
lord of cloud and wave,

Wind of winds, clothed on with darkness
whence as lightning light comes forth,

We that know thee strong to guard and smite,
to scatter and to save,

We to whom the south-west wind is dear
as Athens held the north.

He for her waged war as thou for us against
all powers defiant,

Fleets full-fraught with storm from Persia,
laden deep with death from Spain:
Thee the giant god of song and battle hailed
as god and giant,

Yet not his but ours the land is whence thy
praise should ring and rain;

Rain as rapture shed from song, and ring as
trumpets blown for battle,

Sound and sing before thee, loud and
glad as leaps and sinks the sea:

Yea, the sea's white steeds are curbed and
spurred of thee, and pent as cattle,

Yet they laugh with love and pride to
live, subdued not save of thee.

Ears that hear thee hear in heaven the sound
of widening wings gigantic,

Eyes that see the cloud-lift westward see
thy darkening brows divine;

Wings whose measure is the limit of the limit-
less Atlantic,

Brows that bend, and bid the sovereign
sea submit her soul to thine.

III.

Twelve days since is it—twelve days gone,
Lord of storm, that a storm-bow shone
Higher than sweeps thy sublime dark wing,
Fair as dawn is and sweet like spring?

Never dawn in the deep wide east
Spread so splendid and strange a feast,
Whence the soul as it drank and fed
Felt such rapture of wonder shed.

Never spring in the wild wood's heart
Felt such flowers at her footfall start,
Born of earth, as arose on sight
Born of heaven and of storm and light.

Stern and sullen, the grey grim sea
Swelled and strove as in toils, though free,
Free as heaven, and as heaven sublime,
Clear as heaven of the toils of time.

IV.

Suddenly, sheer from the heights to the depths
of the sky and the sea,
Sprang from the darkness alive as a vision of
life to be

Glory triune and transcendent of colour afar
and afore,

Arching and darkening the darkness with
light as of dream or desire.

Heaven, in the depth of its height, shone wist-
ful and wan from above:

Earth from beneath, and the sea, shone
stricken and breathless with love.

As a shadow may shine, so shone they; as
ghosts of the viewless blest,

That sleep hath sight of alive in a rapture of
sunbright rest,

The green earth glowed and the grey sky
gleamed for a wondrous while;

And the storm's full frown was crossed by the
light of its own deep smile.

As the darkness of thought and of passion is
touched by the light that gives

Life deathless as love from the depth of a
spirit that sees and lives,

From the soul of a seer and a singer, wherein
as a scroll unfurled

Lies open the scripture of light and of dark-
ness, the word of the world,

So, shapeless and measureless, lurid as an-
guish and haggard as crime,

Pale as the front of oblivion and dark as the
heart of time,

The wild wan heaven at its height was assailed
and subdued and made

More fair than the skies that know not of
storm and endure not shade.

The grim sea-swell, grey, sleepless, and sad
as a soul estranged,

Shone, smiled, took heart, and was glad of its
wrath: and the world's face changed.

V.

Up from moorlands northward gleaming
Even to heaven's transcendent height,
Clothed with massive cloud, and seeming

All one fortress reared of night,
Down to where the deep sea, dreaming

Angry dreams, lay dark and white,
White as death and dark as fate,
Heaving with the strong wind's weight,
Sad with stormy pride of state,
One full rainbow shone elate.

Up from inmost memory's dwelling
Where the light of life abides,
Where the past finds tongue, foretelling
Time that comes and grace that guides,

Power that saves and sways, compelling
 Souls that ebb and flow like tides,
 Shone or seemed to shine and swim
 Through the cloud-surf great and grim,
 Thought's live surge, the soul of him
 By whose light the sun looks dim.

In what synod were they sitting,
 All the gods and lords of time,
 Whence they watched as fen-fires flitting
 Years and names of men sublime,
 When their counsels found it fitting
 One should stand where none might
 climb—

None of man begotten, none
 Born of men beneath the sun
 Till the race of time be run,
 Save this heaven-enfranchised one?

With what rapture of creation
 Was the soul supernal thrilled,
 With what pride of adoration
 Was the world's heart fired and filled,
 Heaved in heavenward exultation
 Higher than hopes or dreams might build,
 Grave with awe not known while he
 Was not, mad with glorious glee
 As the sun-saluted sea,
 When his hour bade Shakespeare be?

VI.

There, clear as night beholds her crowning
 seven,
 The sea beheld his likeness set in heaven.
 The shadow of his spirit full in sight
 Shone: for the shadow of that soul is
 light.

Nor heaven alone bore witness: earth avowed
 Him present, and acclaimed of storm aloud.
 From the arching sky to the ageless hills and
 sea

The whole world, visible, audible, was he:
 Each part of all that wove that wondrous
 whole

The raiment of the presence of his soul.
 The sun that smote and kissed the dark to
 death

Spake, smiled, and strove, like song's trium-
 phant breath;

The soundless cloud whose thunderous heart
 was dumb

Swelled, lowered, and shrank to feel its con-
 queror come.

Yet high from heaven its empire vast and
 vain

Frowned, and renounced not night's reluctant
 reign.

The serpentine swift sounds and shapes
 wherein

The stainless sea mocks earth and death and
 sin,

Crawls dark as craft, or flashes keen as hate,
 Subdued and insubmissive, strong like fate

And weak like man, bore wrathful witness yet
 That storms and sins are more than suns that
 set,

That evil everlasting, girt for strife
 Eternal, wars with hope as death with life.

The dark sharp shifting wind that bade the
 waves

Falter, lose heart, bow down like foes made
 slaves,

And waxed within more bitter as they bowed,
 Baffling the sea, swallowing the sun with
 cloud,

Devouring fast as fire on earth devours
 And hungering hard as frost that feeds on
 flowers,

Clothed round with fog that reeked as fume
 from hell,

And darkening with its miscreative spell
 Light, glad and keen and splendid as the
 sword

Whose heft had known Othello's hand its
 lord,

Spake all the soul that hell drew back to greet
 And felt its fire shrink shuddering from his
 feet.

Far off the darkness darkened, and recoiled,
 And neared again, and triumphed: and the
 coiled

Colourless cloud and sea discoloured grew
 Conscious of horror huge as heaven, and knew
 Where Goneril's soul made chill and foul the
 mist,

And all the leprous life in Regan hissed.
 Fierce homeless ghosts, rejected of the pit,
 From hell to hell of storm fear watched them
 flit.

About them and before, the dull grey gloom
 Shuddered, and heaven seemed hateful as
 the tomb

That shrinks from resurrection; and from out
 That sullen hell which girt their shades about
 The nether soul that lurks and lowers within
 Man, made of dust and fire and shame and
 sin,

Breathed: all the cloud that felt it breathe and
 blight
 Was blue as plague or black as thunderous
 night.
 Elect of hell, the children of his hate
 Thronged, as to storm sweet heaven's tri-
 umphal gate.
 The terror of his giving rose and shone
 Imminent: life had put its likeness on.
 But higher than all its horrent height of
 shade
 Shone sovereign, seen by light itself had made,
 Above the woes of all the world, above
 Life, sin, and death, his myriad-minded love.
 From landward heights whereon the radiance
 leant
 Full-fraught from heaven, intense and immi-
 nent,
 To depths wherein the seething strengths of
 cloud
 Scarce matched the wrath of waves whereon
 they bowed,
 From homeborn pride and kindling love of
 home
 To the outer skies and seas of fire and foam,
 From splendour soft as dew that sundawn
 thrills
 To gloom that shudders round the world it
 fills,
 From midnights murmuring round Titania's
 ear
 To midnights maddening round the rage of
 Lear,
 The wonder woven of storm and sun became
 One with the light that lightens from his
 name.
 The music moving on the sea that felt
 The storm-wind even as snows of springtide
 melt
 Was blithe as Ariel's hand or voice might
 make
 And bid all grief die gladly for its sake.
 And there the soul alive in ear and eye
 That watched the wonders of an hour pass by
 Saw brighter than all stars that heaven in-
 spheres
 The silent splendour of Cordelia's tears,
 Felt in the whispers of the quickening wind
 The radiance of the laugh of Rosalind,
 And heard, in sounds that melt the souls of
 men
 With love of love, the tune of Imogen.

VII.

For the strong north-east is not strong to
 subdue and to slay the divine south-west,
 And the darkness is less than the light that it
 darkens, and dies in reluctant rest.
 It hovers and hangs on the labouring and
 trembling ascent of the dawn from the
 deep,
 Till the sun's eye quicken the world and the
 waters, and smite it again into sleep.
 Night, holy and starry, the fostress of souls,
 with the fragrance of heaven in her
 breath,
 Subdues with the sense of her godhead the
 forces and mysteries of sorrow and death.
 Eternal as dawn's is the comfort she gives:
 but the mist that beleaguers and slays
 Comes, passes, and is not: the strength of it
 withers, appalled or assuaged by the day's.
 Faith, haggard as Fear that had borne her,
 and dark as the sire that begat her, De-
 spair,
 Held rule on the soul of the world and the
 song of it saddening through ages that
 were;
 Dim centuries that darkened and brightened
 and darkened again, and the soul of their
 song
 Was great as their grief, and sublime as their
 suffering, and strong as their sorrows
 were strong.
 It knew not, it saw not, but shadows triune,
 and evoked by the strength of their spell
 Dark hell, and the mountain of anguish, and
 heaven that was hollower and harder
 than hell.
 These are not: the womb of the darkness that
 bare them rejects them, and knows them
 no more:
 Thought, fettered in misery and iron, revives
 in the light that it lived in of yore.
 For the soul that is wisdom and freedom, the
 spirit of England redeemed from her
 past,
 Speaks life through the lips of the master and
 lord of her children, the first and the last.
 Thought, touched by his hand and redeemed
 by his breath, sees, hears, and accepts
 from above
 The limitless lightnings of vision and passion,
 the measureless music of love.

A SWIMMER'S DREAM.

NOVEMBER 4, 1889.

Somno mollior unda.

I.

DAWN is dim on the dark soft water,
 Soft and passionate, dark and sweet.
 Love's own self was the deep sea's daughter,
 Fair and flawless from face to feet,
 Hailed of all when the world was golden,
 Loved of lovers whose names beholden
 Thrill men's eyes as with light of olden
 Days more glad than their flight was fleet.

So they sang: but for men that love her,
 Souls that hear not her word in vain,
 Earth beside her and heaven above her
 Seem but shadows that wax and wane.
 Softer than sleep's are the sea's caresses,
 Kinder than love's that betrays and blesses,
 Blither than spring's when her flowerful tresses

Shake forth sunlight and shine with rain.

All the strength of the waves that perish
 Swells beneath me and laughs and sighs,
 Sighs for love of the life they cherish,
 Laughs to know that it lives and dies,
 Dies for joy of its life, and lives
 Thrilled with joy that its brief death gives—
 Death whose laugh or whose breath forgives
 Change that bids it subside and rise.

II.

Hard and heavy, remote but nearing,
 Sunless hangs the severe sky's weight,
 Cloud on cloud, though the wind be veering
 Heaped on high to the sundawn's gate.
 Dawn and even and noon are one,
 Veiled with vapour and void of sun;
 Nought in sight or in fancied hearing
 Now less mighty than time or fate.

The grey sky gleams and the grey seas glimmer,
 Pale and sweet as a dream's delight,
 As a dream's where darkness and light seem
 dimmer,

Touched by dawn or subdued by night.
 The dark wind, stern and sublime and sad,
 Swings the rollers to westward, clad
 With lustrous shadow that lures the swimmer,
 Lures and lulls him with dreams of light.

Light, and sleep, and delight, and wonder,
 Change, and rest, and a charm of cloud,
 Fill the world of the skies whereunder
 Heaves and quivers and pants aloud
 All the world of the waters, hoary
 Now, but clothed with its own live glory,
 That mates the lightning and mocks the
 thunder
 With light more living and word more
 proud.

III.

Far off westward, whither sets the sounding
 strife,
 Strife more sweet than peace, of shoreless
 waves whose glee
 Scorns the shore and loves the wind that
 leaves them free,
 Strange as sleep and pale as death and fair
 as life,
 Shifts the moonlight-coloured sunshine on
 the sea.

Toward the sunset's goal the sunless waters
 crowd,
 Fast as autumn days toward winter: yet
 it seems
 Here that autumn wanes not, here that
 woods and streams
 Lose not heart and change not likeness, chill-
 ed and bowed
 Warped and wrinkled: here the days are
 fair as dreams.

IV.

O russet-robed November,
 What ails thee so to smile?
 Chill August, pale September,
 Endured a woful while,
 And fell as falls an ember
 From forth a flameless pile:
 But golden-girt November
 Bids all she looks on smile.

The lustrous foliage, waning
 As wanes the morning moon,
 Here falling, here refraining,
 Outbraves the pride of June

With statelier semblance, feigning
 No fear lest death be soon:
 As though the woods thus waning
 Should wax to meet the moon.

As though, when fields lie stricken
 By grey December's breath,
 These lordlier growths that sicken
 And die for fear of death
 Should feel the sense requicken
 That hears what springtide saith
 And thrills for love, spring-stricken
 And pierced with April's breath.

The keen white-winged north-easter
 That stings and spurs thy sea
 Doth yet but feed and feast her
 With glowing sense of glee:
 Calm chained her, storm released her,
 And storm's glad voice was he:
 South-wester or north-easter,
 Thy winds rejoice the sea.

V.

A dream, a dream is it all—the season,
 The sky, the water, the wind, the shore?
 A day-born dream of divine unreason,
 A marvel moulded of sleep—no more?
 For the cloudlike wave that my limbs while
 cleaving
 Feel as in slumber beneath them heaving
 Soothes the sense as to slumber, leaving
 Sense of nought that was known of yore.

A purer passion, a lordlier leisure,
 A peace more happy than lives on land,
 Fulfils with pulse of diviner pleasure
 The dreaming head and the steering hand.
 I lean my cheek to the cold grey pillow,
 The deep soft swell of the full broad billow,
 And close mine eyes for delight past measure,
 And wish the wheel of the world would
 stand.

The wild-winged hour that we fain would
 capture
 Falls as from heaven that its light feet
 clomb,
 So brief, so soft, and so full the rapture
 Was felt that soothed me with sense of
 home.
 To sleep, to swim, and to dream, for ever—
 Such joy the vision of man saw never;
 For here too soon will a dark day sever
 The sea-bird's wing from the sea-wave's
 foam.

A dream, and more than a dream, and dim-
 mer
 At once and brighter than dreams that
 flee,
 The moment's joy of the seaward swimmer
 Abides, remembered as truth may be.
 Not all the joy and not all the glory
 Must fade as leaves when the woods wax
 hoary;
 For there the downs and the sea-banks glim-
 mer,
 And here to south of them swells the sea.

GRACE DARLING.

TAKE, O star of all our seas, from not an
 alien hand,
 Homage paid of song bowed down before
 thy glory's face,
 Thou the living light of all our lovely stormy
 strand,
 Thou the brave north-country's very glory
 of glories, Grace.
 Loud and dark about the lighthouse rings and
 glares the night;
 Glares with foam-lit gloom and darkling
 fire of storm and spray,

Rings with roar of winds in chase and rage
 of waves in flight,
 Howls and hisses as with mouths of snakes
 and wolves at bay.
 Scarce the cliffs of the islets, scarce the walls
 of Joyous Gard,
 Flash to sight between the deadlier light-
 nings of the sea:
 Storm is lord and master of a midnight evil-
 starred,
 Nor may sight or fear discern what evil
 stars may be.

Dark as death and white as snow the sea-
 swell scowls and shines,
 Heaves and yearns and pants for prey,
 from ravening lip to lip,
 Strong in rage of rapturous anguish, lines
 on hurtling lines,
 Ranks on charging ranks, that break and
 rend the battling ship.
 All the night is mad and murderous: who
 shall front the night?
 Not the prow that labours, helpless as a
 storm-blown leaf,
 Where the rocks and waters, darkling depth
 and beetling height,
 Rage with wave on shattering wave and
 thundering reef on reef.
 Death is fallen upon the prisoners there of
 darkness, bound
 Like as thralls with links of iron fast in
 bonds of doom;
 How shall any way to break the bands of
 death be found,
 Any hand avail to pluck them from that
 raging tomb?
 All the night is great with child of death: no
 stars above
 Show them hope in heaven, no lights from
 shoreward help on earth.
 Is there help or hope to seaward, is there help
 in love,
 Hope in pity, where the ravening hounds
 of storm make mirth?
 Where the light that shows the naked eyeless
 face of Death
 Nearer, laughing dumb and grim across
 the loud live storm?
 Not in human heart or hand or speech of
 human breath,
 Surely, nor in saviours found of mortal
 face or form.
 Yet below the light, between the reefs, a skiff
 shot out
 Seems a sea-bird fain to breast and brave
 the strait fierce pass
 Whence the channelled roar of waters driven
 in raging rout,
 Pent and pressed and maddened, speaks
 their monstrous might and mass.
 Thunder heaves and howls about them,
 lightning leaps and flashes,
 Hard at hand, not high in heaven, but
 close between the walls
 Heaped and hollowed of the storms of old,
 whence reels and crashes

All the rage of all the unbaffled wave that
 breaks and falls
 Who shall thwart the madness and the glad-
 ness of it, laden
 Full with heavy fate, and joyous as the
 birds that whirl?
 Nought in heaven or earth, if not one mortal-
 moulded maiden,
 Nought if not the soul that glorifies a north-
 land girl.
 Not the rocks that break may baffle, not the
 reefs that thwart
 Stay the ravenous rapture of the waves that
 crowd and leap
 Scarce their flashing laughter shows the hun-
 ger of their heart,
 Scarce their lion-throated roar the wrath at
 heart they keep.
 Child and man and woman in the grasp of
 death clenched fast
 Tremble, clothed with darkness round
 about, and scarce draw breath,
 Scarce lift eyes up toward the light that saves
 not, scarce may cast
 Thought or prayer up, caught and tram-
 melled in the snare of death.
 Not as sea-mews cling and laugh or sun their
 plumes and sleep
 Cling and cower the wild night's waifs of
 shipwreck, blind with fear,
 Where the fierce reef scarce yields foothold
 that a bird might keep,
 And the clamorous darkness deadens eye
 and deafens ear.
 Yet beyond their helpless hearing, out of
 hopeless sight,
 Saviours, armed and girt upon with
 strength of heart, fare forth,
 Sire and daughter, hand on oar and face
 against the night,
 Maid and man whose names are beacons
 ever to the North.
 Nearer now; but all the madness of the storm-
 ing surf
 Hounds and roars them back; but roars
 and hounds them back in vain:
 As a pleasure-skiff may graze the lake-em-
 banking turf,
 So the boat that bears them grates the
 rock where-toward they strain.
 Dawn as fierce and haggard as the face of
 night scarce guides
 Toward the cries that rent and clove the
 darkness, crying for aid,

Hours on hours, across the engorged reluctance of the tides,

Sire and daughter, high-souled man and mightier-hearted maid.

Not the bravest land that ever breasted war's grim sea,

Hurled her foes back harried on the lowlands whence they came,

Held her own and smote her smiters down, while such durst be,

Shining northward, shining southward, as the aurean flame,

Not our mother, not Northumberland, brought ever forth,

Though no southern shore may match the sons that kiss her mouth,

Children worthier all the birthright given of the ardent north

Where the fire of hearts outburns the suns that fire the south.

Even such fire was this that lit them, not from lowering skies

Where the darkling dawn flagged, stricken in the sun's own shrine,

Down the gulf of storm subsiding, till their earnest eyes

Find the relics of the ravening night that spared but nine.

Life by life the man redeems them, head by storm-worn head,

While the girl's hand stays the boat whereof the waves are fain:

Ah, but woe for one, the mother clasping fast her dead!

Happier, had the surges slain her with her children slain.

Back they bear, and bring between them safe the woful nine,

Where above the ravenous Hawkers fixed at watch for prey

Storm and calm behold the Longstone's towering signal shine

Now as when that labouring night brought forth a shuddering day.

Now as then, though like the hounds of storm against her snarling

All the clamorous years between us storm down many a fame

As our sires beheld before us we behold Grace Darling

Crowned and throned our queen, and as they hailed we hail her name.

Nay, not ours alone, her kinsfolk born, though chiefest ours,

East and west and south acclaim her queen of England's maids,

Star more sweet than all their stars and flower than all their flowers,

Higher in heaven and earth than star that sets or flower that fades.

How should land or sea that nurtured her forget, or love

Hold not fast her fame for us while aught is borne in mind?

Land and sea beneath us, sun and moon and stars above,

Bear the bright soul witness, seen of all but souls born blind.

Stars and moon and sun may wax and wane, subside and rise,

Age on age as flake on flake of showering snows be shed:

Not till earth be sunless, not till death strike blind the skies,

May the deathless love that waits on deathless deeds be dead.

Years on years have withered since beside the hearth once thine

I, too young to have seen thee, touched thy father's hallowed hand:

Thee and him shall all men see for ever, stars that shine

While the sea that spared thee girds and glorifies the land.

LOCH TORRIDON.

To E. H.

THE dawn of night more fair than morning rose,

Stars hurrying forth on stars, as snows on snows

Haste when the wind and winter bid them speed.

Vague miles of moorland road behind us lay Scarce traversed ere the day

Sank, and the sun forsook us at our need,
Belated. Where we thought to have rested,
rest

Was none; for soft Maree's dim quivering
breast,

Bound round with gracious inland girth of
green

And fearless of the wild wave-wandering
West,

Shone shelterless for strangers; and unseen
The goal before us lay

Of all our blithe and strange and strenuous
day.

For when the northering road faced westward
—when

The dark sharp sudden gorge dropped sea-
ward—then,

Beneath the stars, between the steeps, the
track

We followed, lighted not of moon or sun,
And plunging whither none

Might guess, while heaven and earth were
hoar and black,

Seemed even the dim still pass whence none
turns back:

And through the twilight leftward of the way,
And down the dark, with many a laugh and
leap,

The light blithe hill-streams shone from scur
to steep

In glittering pride of play;
And ever while the night grew great and deep

We felt but saw not what the hills would
keep

Sacred awhile from sense of moon or star;
And full and far

Beneath us, sweet and strange as heaven may
be,

The sea.

The very sea: no mountain-moulded lake
Whose fluctuant shapeliness is fain to take

Shape from the steadfast shore that rules it
round,

And only from the storms a casual sound:
The sea, that harbours in her heart sublime

The supreme heart of music deep as time,
And in her spirit strong

The spirit of all imaginable song.

Not a whisper or lisp from the waters: the
skies were not silenter. Peace

Was between them; a passionless rapture of
respite as soft as release.

Not a sound, but a sense that possessed and
pervaded with patient delight

The soul and the body, clothed round with
the comfort of limitless night.

Night infinite, living, adorable, loved of the
land and the sea:

Night, mother of mercies, who saith to the
spirits in prison, Be free.

And softer than dewfall, and kindlier than
starlight, and keener than wine,

Came round us the fragrance of waters, the
life of the breath of the brine.

We saw not, we heard not, the face or the
voice of the waters: we knew

By the darkling delight of the wind as the
sense of the sea in it grew,

By the pulse of the darkness about us en-
kindled and quickened, that here,

Unseen and unheard of us, surely the goal
we had faith in was near.

A silence diviner than music, a darkness
diviner than light,

Fulfilled as from heaven with a measureless
comfort the measure of night.

But never a roof for shelter
And never a sign for guide

Rose doubtful or visible: only
And hardly and gladly we heard

The soft waves whisper and welter,
Subdued, and allured to subside,

By the mild night's magic: the lonely
Sweet silence was soothed, not stirred,

By the noiseless noise of the gleaming
Glad ripples, that played and sighed,

Kissed, laughed, recoiled, and relented,
Whispered, flickered, and fled.

No season was this for dreaming
How oft, with a stormier tide,

Had the wrath of the winds been
vented

On sons of the tribes long dead:
The tribes whom time, and the changes

Of things, and the stress of doom,
Have erased and effaced; forgotten

As wrecks or weeds of the shore
In sight of the stern hill-ranges

That hardly may change their gloom
When the fruits of the years wax rotten

And the seed of them springs no more.
For the dim strait footway dividing

The waters that breathed below
Led safe to the kindest of shelters

That ever awoke into light:

And still in remembrance abiding
 Broods over the stars that glow
 And the water that eddies and welters
 The passionate peace of the night.

All night long, in the world of sleep,
 Skies and waters were soft and deep:
 Shadow clothed them, and silence made
 Soundless music of dream and shade:
 All above us, the livelong night,
 Shadow, kindled with sense of light;
 All around us, the brief night long,
 Silence, laden with sense of song.
 Stars and mountains without, we knew,
 Watched and waited, the soft night through:
 All unseen, but divined and dear,
 Thrilled the touch of the sea's breath near:
 All unheard, but alive like sound,
 Throbbled the sense of the sea's life round:
 Round us, near us, in depth and height,
 Soft as darkness and keen as light.

And the dawn leapt in at my casement: and
 there, as I rose, at my feet
 No waves of the landlocked waters, no lake
 submissive and sweet,
 Soft slave of the lordly seasons, whose breath
 may loose it or freeze;
 But to left and to right and ahead was the
 ripple whose pulse is the sea's.
 From the gorge we had travelled by star-
 light the sunrise, winged and aflame,
 Shone large on the live wide wavelets that
 shuddered with joy as it came;
 As it came and caressed and possessed them,
 till panting and laughing with light
 From mountain to mountain the water was
 kindled and stung to delight.
 And the grey gaunt heights that embraced
 and constrained and compelled it were
 glad,
 And the rampart of rock, stark naked, that
 thwarted and barred it, was clad
 With a stern grey splendour of sunrise: and
 scarce had I sprung to the sea
 When the dawn and the water were wedded,
 the hills and the sky set free.

The chain of the night was broken: the waves
 that embraced me and smiled
 And flickered and fawned in the sunlight,
 alive, unafraid, undefiled,
 Were sweeter to swim in than air, though ful-
 filled with the mounting morn,
 Could be for the birds whose triumph rejoiced
 that a day was born.
 And a day was arisen indeed for us. Years
 and the changes of years
 Clothed round with their joys and their sor-
 rows, and dead as their hopes and their
 fears,
 Lie noteless and nameless, unlit by remem-
 brance or record of days
 Worth wonder or memory, or cursing or
 blessing, or passion or praise,
 Between us who live and forget not, but
 yearn with delight in it yet,
 And the day we forget not, and never may live
 and may think to forget.
 And the years that were kindlier and
 fairer, and kindled with pleasures as
 keen,
 Have eclipsed not with lights or with shadows
 the light on the face of it seen.
 For softly and surely, as nearer the boat that
 we gazed from drew,
 The face of the precipice opened and bade us
 as birds pass through,
 And the bark shot sheer to the sea
 through the strait of the sharp steep
 cleft,
 The portal that opens with imminent ram-
 pires to right and to left,
 Sublime as the sky they darken and strange
 as a spell-struck dream,
 On the world unconfined of the mountains,
 the reign of the sea supreme,
 The kingdom of westward waters, wherein
 when we swam we knew
 The waves that we clove were boundless, the
 wind on our brows that blew
 Had swept no land and no lake, and had
 warred not on tower or on tree,
 But came on us hard out of heaven, and alive
 with the soul of the sea.

THE PALACE OF PAN.

INSCRIBED TO MY MOTHER.

SEPTEMBER, all glorious with gold, as a king
 In the radiance of triumph attired,
 Outlightening the summer, outsweetening the
 spring,
 Broods wide on the woodlands with limitless
 wing,
 A presence of all men desired.

Far eastward and westward the sun-coloured
 lands
 Smile warm as the light on them smiles;
 And statelier than temples upbuilt with
 hands,
 Tall column by column, the sanctuary stands
 Of the pine-forest's infinite aisles.

Mute worship, too fervent for praise or for
 prayer,
 Possesses the spirit with peace,
 Fulfilled with the breath of the luminous air,
 The fragrance, the silence, the shadows as fair
 As the rays that recede or increase.

Ridged pillars that redden aloft and aloof,
 With never a branch for a nest,
 Sustain the sublime indivisible roof,
 To the storm and the sun in his majesty proof,
 And awful as waters at rest.

Man's hand hath not measured the height
 of them thought
 May measure not, awe may not know;
 In its shadow the woofs of the woodland are
 wrought;
 As a bird is the sun in the toils of them caught,
 And the flakes of it scattered as snow.

As the shreds of a plumage of gold on the
 ground
 The sun-flakes by multitudes lie,
 Shed loose as the petals of roses disowned
 On the floors of the forest engilt and em-
 browned
 And reddened afar and anigh.

Dim centuries with darkling inscrutable hands
 Have reared and secluded the shrine
 For gods that we know not, and kindled as
 brands
 On the altar the years that are dust, and their
 sands
 Time's glass has forgotten for sign.

A temple whose transepts are measured by
 miles,
 Whose chancel has morning for priest,
 Whose floor-work the foot of no spoiler
 defiles,
 Whose musical silence no music beguiles,
 No festivals limit its feast.

The noon's ministration, the night's and the
 dawn's,
 Conceals not, reveals not for man,
 On the slopes of the herbless and blossomless
 lawns,
 Some track of a nymph's or some trail of a
 faun's
 To the place of the slumber of Pan.

Thought, kindled and quickened by worship
 and wonder
 To rapture too sacred for fear
 On the ways that unite or divide them in
 sunder,
 Alone may discern if about them or under
 Be token or trace of him here.

With passionate awe that is deeper than panic
 The spirit subdued and unshaken
 Takes heed of the godhead terrene and
 Titanic
 Whose footfall is felt on the breach of volcanic
 Sharp steeps that their fire has forsaken.

By a spell more serene than the dim necro-
 mantic
 Dead charms of the past and the night,
 Or the terror that lurked in the noon to make
 frantic
 Where Etna takes shape from the limbs of
 gigantic
 Dead gods disanointed of might,

The spirit made one with the spirit whose
 breath
 Makes noon in the woodland sublime
 Abides as entranced in a presence that saith
 Things loftier than life and serener than
 death,
 Triumphant and silent as time.

PINE RIDGE: September, 1893.

A YEAR'S CAROLS.

JANUARY.

Hail, January, that bearest here
 On snowbright breasts the babe-faced year
 That weeps and trembles to be born.
 Hail, maid and mother, strong and bright,
 Hooded and cloaked and shod with white,
 Whose eyes are stars that match the morn
 Thy forehead braves the storm's bent bow,
 Thy feet enkindle stars of snow.

FEBRUARY.

Wan February with weeping cheer,
 Whose cold hand guides the youngling year
 Down misty roads of mire and rime,
 Before thy pale and fitful face
 The shrill wind shifts the clouds apace
 Through skies the morning scarce may
 climb.
 Thine eyes are thick with heavy tears,
 But lit with hopes that light the year's.

MARCH.

Hail, happy March, whose foot on earth
 Rings as the blast of martial mirth
 When trumpets fire men's hearts for fray.
 No race of wild things winged or finned
 May match the might that wings thy wind
 Through air and sea, through scud and
 spray
 Strong joy and thou were powers twin-born
 Of tempest and the towering morn.

APRIL.

Crowned April, king whose kiss bade earth
 Bring forth to time her lordliest birth
 When Shakespeare from thy lips drew
 breath
 And laughed to hold in one soft hand
 A spell that bade the world's wheel stand,
 And power on life, and power on death,
 With quiring suns and sunbright showers
 Praise him, the flower of all thy flowers.

MAY.

Hail, May, whose bark puts forth full-sailed
 For summer; May, whom Chaucer hailed
 With all his happy might of heart,
 And gave thy rosebright daisy-tips
 Strange fragrance from his amorous lips
 That still thine own breath seems to part
 And sweeten till each word they say
 Is even a flower of flowering May.

JUNE.

Strong June, superb, serene, elate
 With conscience of thy sovereign state
 Untouched of thunder, though the storm
 Scathe here and there thy shuddering skies
 And bid its lightning cross thine eyes
 With fire, thy golden hours inform
 Earth and the souls of men with life
 That brings forth peace from shining strife.

JULY.

Hail, proud July, whose fervent mouth
 Bids even be morn and north be south
 By grace and gospel of thy word,
 Whence all the splendour of the sea
 Lies breathless with delight in thee
 And marvel at the music heard
 From the ardent silent lips of noon
 And midnight's rapturous plenilune.

AUGUST.

Great August, lord of golden lands,
 Whose lordly joy through seas and strands
 And all the red-ripe heart of earth
 Strikes passion deep as life, and stills
 The folded vales and folding hills
 With gladness too divine for mirth,
 The gracious glories of thine eyes
 Make night a noon where darkness dies.

SEPTEMBER.

Hail, kind September, friend whose grace
 Renews the bland year's bounteous face
 With largess given of corn and wine
 Through many a land that laughs with
 love
 Of thee and all the heaven above,
 More fruitful found than all save thine
 Whose skies fulfil with strenuous cheer
 The fervent fields that knew thee near.

OCTOBER.

October of the tawny crown,
 Whose heavy-laden hands drop down
 Blessing, the bounties of thy breath
 And mildness of thy mellowing might
 Fill earth and heaven with love and light
 Too sweet for fear to dream of death
 Or memory, while thy joy lives yet,
 To know what joy would fain forget.

NOVEMBER.

Hail, soft November, though thy pale
Sad smile rebuke the words that hail
Thy sorrow with no sorrowing words
Or gratulate thy grief with song
Less bitter than the winds that wrong
Thy withering woodlands, where the birds
Keep hardly heart to sing or see
How fair thy faint wan face may be.

DECEMBER.

December, thou whose hallowing hands
On shuddering seas and hardening lands
Set as a sacramental sign
The seal of Christmas felt on earth
As witness toward a new year's birth
Whose promise makes thy death divine,
The crowning joy that comes of thee
Makes glad all grief on land or sea.

ENGLAND: AN ODE.

I.

SEA and strand, and a lordlier land than sea-
tides rolling and rising sun
Clasp and lighten in climes that brighten with
day when day that was here is done,
Call aloud on their children, proud with
trust that future and past are one.

Far and near from the swan's nest here the
storm-birds bred of her fair white breast,
Sons whose home was the sea-wave's foam,
have borne the fame of her east and west;
North and south has the storm-wind's mouth
rung praise of England and England's
quest.

Fame, wherever her flag flew, never forbore
to fly with an equal wing:
France and Spain with their warrior train
bowed down before her as thrall to king;
India knelt at her feet, and felt her sway more
fruitful of life than spring.

Darkness round them as iron bound fell off
from races of elder name,
Slain at sight of her eyes, whose light bids
freedom lighten and burn as flame;
Night endures not the touch that cures of
kingship tyrants, and slaves of shame.

All the terror of time, where error and fear
were lords of a world of slaves,
Age on age in resurgent rage and anguish
darkening as waves on waves,
Fell or fled from a face that shed such grace
as quickens the dust of graves.

Things of night at her glance took flight: the
strengths of darkness recoiled and
sank:

Sank the fires of the murderous pyres where-
on wild agony writhed and shrank:
Rose the light of the reign of right from gulfs
of years that the darkness drank.

Yet the might of her wings in flight, whence
glory lightens and music rings,
Loud and bright as the dawn's, shall smite
and still the discord of evil things,
Yet not slain by her radiant reign, but dark-
ened now by her sail-stretched wings.

II.

Music made of change and conquest, glory
born of evil slain,
Stilled the discord, slew the darkness, bade
the lights of tempest wane,
Where the deathless dawn of England rose in
sign that right should reign.

Mercy, where the tiger wallowed mad and
blind with blood and lust,
Justice, where the jackal yelped and fed,
and slaves allowed it just,
Rose as England's light on Asia rose, and
smote them down to dust.

Justice bright as mercy, mercy girt by justice
with her sword,
Smote and saved and raised and ruined, till
the tyrant-ridden horde
Saw the lightning fade from heaven and knew
the sun for God and lord.

Where the footfall sounds of England, where
the smile of England shines,
Rings the tread and laughs the face of free-
dom, fair as hope divines
Days to be, more brave than ours and lit by
lordlier stars for signs.

All our past acclaims our future: Shakes-
peare's voice and Nelson's hand,
Milton's faith and Wordsworth's trust in this
our chosen and chainless land,
Bear us witness: come the world against her,
England yet shall stand.

Earth and sea bear England witness if he lied
who said it; he

Whom the winds that ward her, waves
that clasp, and herb and flower and
tree

Fed with English dews and sunbeams, hail
as more than man may be.

No man ever spake as he that bade our Eng-
land be but true,

Keep but faith with England fast and firm,
and none should hid her rue;

None may speak as he: but all may know the
sign that Shakespeare knew.

III.

From the springs of the dawn, from the depths
of the noon, from the heights of the night
that shine,

Hope, faith, and remembrance of glory that
found but in England her throne and her
shrine,

Speak louder than song may proclaim them,
that here is the seal of them set for a
sign.

And loud as the sea's voice thunders applause
of the land that is one with the sea

Speaks Time in the ear of the people that
never at heart was not inly free
The word of command that assures us of life,
if we will but that life shall be;

If the race that is first of the races of men who
behold unashamed the sun

Stand fast and forget not the sign that is given
of the years and the wars that are done,
The token that all who are born of its blood
should in heart as in blood be one.

The word of remembrance that lightens as
fire from the steepes of the storm-lit past
Bids only the faith of our fathers endure in
us, firm as they held it fast:

That the glory which was from the first upon
England alone may endure to the last.

That the love and the hate may change not,
the faith may not fade, nor the wrath
nor scorn,

That shines for her sons and that burns for
her foemen as fire of the night or the
morn:

That the births of her womb may forget not
the sign of the glory wherein they were
born.

A light that is more than the sunlight, an air
that is brighter than morning's breath,
Clothes England about as the strong sea
clasps her, and answers the word that it
saith;

The word that assures her of life if she change
not, and choose not the ways of death.

Change darkens and lightens around her,
alternate in hope and in fear to be:

Hope knows not if fear speak truth, nor
fear whether hope be not blind as she:

But the sun is in heaven that beholds her im-
mortal, and girdled with life by the sea.

ETON: AN ODE.

FOR THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE COLLEGE.

I.

FOUR hundred summers and fifty have shone
on the meadows of Thames and died
Since Eton arose in an age that was darkness,
and shone by his radiant side
As a star that the spell of a wise man's word
bade live and ascend and abide.

And ever as time's flow brightened, a river
more dark than the storm-clothed
sea,

And age upon age rose fairer and larger in
promise of hope set free,

With England Eton her child kept pace as a
fostress of men to be.

And ever as earth waxed wiser, and softer
 the beating of time's wide wings,
 Since fate fell dark on her father, most hapless
 and gentlest of star-crossed kings,
 Her praise has increased as the chant of the
 dawn that the choir of the noon outsings.

II.

Storm and cloud in the skies were loud, and
 lightning mocked at the blind sun's
 light;
 War and woe on the land below shed heavier
 shadow than falls from night;
 Dark was earth at her dawn of birth as here
 her record of praise is bright.

Clear and fair through her morning air the
 light first laugh of the sunlit stage
 Rose and rang as a fount that sprang from
 depths yet dark with a spent storm's
 rage,
 Loud and glad as a boy's, and bade the sunrise
 open on Shakespeare's age.

Lords of state and of war, whom fate found
 strong in battle, in counsel strong,

Here, ere fate had approved them great,
 abode their season, and thought not long;
 Here too first was the lark's note nursed that
 filled and flooded the skies with song.

III.

Shelley, lyric lord of England's lordliest
 singers, here first heard
 Ring from lips of poets crowned and dead
 the Promethean word
 Whence his soul took fire, and power to out-
 soar the sunward-soaring bird.

Still the reaches of the river, still the light on
 field and hill,
 Still the memories held aloft as lamps for
 hope's young fire to fill,
 Shine, and while the light of England lives
 shall shine for England still.

When four hundred more and fifty years have
 risen and shone and set,
 Bright with names that men remember, loud
 with names that men forget,
 Haply here shall Eton's record be what
 England finds it yet.

THE UNION.

I.

THREE in one, but one in three,
 God, who girt her with the sea,
 Bade our Commonweal to be:
 Nought, if now not one.
 Though fraud and fear would sever
 The bond assured for ever,
 Their shameful strength shall never
 Undo what heaven has done.

II.

South and North and West and East
 Watch the ravens flock to feast,
 Dense as round some death-struck beast,
 Black as night is black.
 Stand fast as faith together
 In stress of treacherous weather
 When hounds and wolves break tether
 And Treason guides the pack.

III.

Lovelier than thy seas are strong,
 Glorious Ireland, sword and song
 Gird and crown thee: none may wrong,
 Save thy sons alone.
 The sea that laughs around us
 Hath sundered not but bound us:
 The sun's first rising found us
 Throned on its equal throne.

IV.

North and South and East and West,
 All true hearts that wish thee best
 Beat one tune and own one quest,
 Staunch and sure as steel.
 God guard from dark disunion
 Our threefold State's communion,
 God save the loyal Union,
 The royal Commonweal!

EAST TO WEST.

<p>SUNSET smiles on sunrise: cast and west are one, Face to face in heaven before the sovereign sun. From the springs of the dawn everlasting a glory renews and transfigures the west, From the depths of the sunset a light as of morning enkindles the broad sea's breast, And the lands and the skies and the waters are glad of the day's and the night's work done.</p> <p>Child of dawn, and regent on the world- wide sea, England smiles on Europe, fair as dawn and free.</p>	<p>Not the waters that gird her are purer, nor mightier the winds that her waters know. But America, daughter and sister of England, is praised of them, far as they flow: Atlantic responds to Pacific the praise of her days that have been and shall be.</p> <p>So from England westward let the watch- word fly, So for England eastward let the seas reply; Praise, honour, and love everlasting be sent on the wind's wings, westward and east, That the pride of the past and the pride of the future may mingle as friends at feast, And the sons of the lords of the world-wide seas be one till the world's life die.</p>
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MUSIC: AN ODE.

<p>I.</p> <p>Was it light that spake from the dark- ness, or music that shone from the word, When the night was enkindled with sound of the sun or the first-born bird? Souls enthralled and entrammelled in bond- age of seasons that fall and rise, Bound fast round with the fetters of flesh, and blinded with light that dies, Lived not surely till music spake, and the spirit of life was heard.</p> <p>II.</p> <p>Music, sister of sunrise, and herald of life to be, Smiled as dawn on the spirit of man, and the thrall was free.</p>	<p>Slave of nature and serf of time, the bondman of life and death, Dumb with passionless patience that breathed but forlorn and reluctant breath, Heard, beheld, and his soul made answer, and communed aloud with the sea.</p> <p>III.</p> <p>Morning spake, and he heard: and the passionate silent noon Kept for him not silence: and soft from the mounting moon Fell the sound of her splendour, heard as dawn's in the breathless night, Not of men but of birds whose note bade man's soul quicken and leap to light: And the song of it spake, and the light and the darkness of earth were as chords in tune.</p>
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INSCRIPTIONS FOR THE FOUR SIDES OF A PEDESTAL.

I.

MARLOWE, the father of the sons of song
 Whose praise is England's crowning praise,
 above
 All glories else that crown her, sweet and
 strong
 As England, clothed with light and fire
 of love,
 And girt with might of passion, thought, and
 trust,
 Stands here in spirit, sleeps not here in dust.

II.

Marlowe, a star too sovereign, too superb,
 To fade when heaven took fire from
 Shakespeare's light,
 A soul that knew but song's triumphal curb
 And love's triumphant bondage, holds
 of right
 His pride of place, who first in place and time
 Made England's voice as England's heart
 sublime.

III.

Marlowe bade England live in living song:
 The light he lifted up lit Shakespeare's
 way:
 He spake, and life sprang forth in music,
 strong
 As fire or lightning, sweet as dawn of
 day.
 Song was a dream where day took night to
 wife:
 'Let there be life,' he said: and there was life.

IV.

Marlowe of all our fathers first beheld
 Beyond the tidal ebb and flow of things
 The tideless depth and height of souls, im-
 pelled
 By thought or passion, borne on waves or
 wings,
 Beyond all flight or sight but song's: and he
 First gave our song a sound that matched our
 sea.

ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD BURTON.

NIGHT or light is it now, wherein
 Sleeps, shut out from the wild world's din,
 Wakes, alive with a life more clear,
 One who found not on earth his kin?

Sleep were sweet for awhile, were dear
 Surely to souls that were heartless here,
 Souls that faltered and flagged and fell,
 Soft of spirit and faint of cheer.

A living soul that had strength to quell
 Hope the spectre and fear the spell,
 Clear-eyed, content with a scorn sublime
 And a faith superb, can it fare not well?

Life, the shadow of wide-winged time,
 Cast from the wings that change as they
 climb,
 Life may vanish in death, and seem
 Less than the promise of last year's prime.

But not for us is the past a dream
 Wherefrom, as light from a clouded stream,
 Faith fades and shivers and ebbs away,
 Faint as the moon if the sundawn gleam.

Faith, whose eyes in the low last ray
 Watch the fire that renews the day,
 Faith which lives in the living past,
 Rock-rooted, swerves not as weeds that
 sway.

As trees that stand in the storm-wind fast
 She stands, unsmitten of death's keen blast,
 With strong remembrance of sunbright
 spring
 Alive at heart to the lifeless last.

Night, she knows, may in no wise cling
 To a soul that sinks not and droops not
 wing,
 A sun that sets not in death's false
 night
 Whose kingdom finds him not thrall but
 king.

Souls there are that for soul's affright
 Bow down and cower in the sun's glad
 sight,
 Clothed round with faith that is one
 with fear,
 And dark with doubt of the live world's
 light.

But him we hailed from afar or near
 As boldest born of the bravest here
 And loved as brightest of souls that
 eyed
 Life, time, and death with unchangeful
 cheer,

A wider soul than the world was wide,
 Whose praise made love of him one with
 pride,

What part has death or has time in him,
 Who rode life's lists as a god might ride?

While England sees not her old praise
 dim,

While still her stars through the world's
 night swim,
 A fame outshining her Raleigh's fame,
 A light that lightens her loud sea's rim,

Shall shine and sound as her sons proclaim
 The pride that kindles at Burton's name.
 And joy shall exalt their pride to be
 The same in birth if in soul the same.

But we that yearn for a friend's face—we
 Who lack the light that on earth was he—
 Mourn, though the light be a quench-
 less flame
 That shines as dawn on a tideless sea.

ELEGY.

1869-1891.

AUVERGNE, Auvergne, O wild and woful land,
 O glorious land and gracious, white as
 gleam
 The stairs of heaven, black as a flameless
 brand,
 Strange even as life, and stranger than a
 dream,

Could earth remember man, whose eyes
 made bright
 The splendour of her beauty, lit by day
 Or soothed and softened and redeemed by
 night,
 Wouldst thou not know what light has
 passed away?

Wouldst thou not know whom England,
 whom the world,
 Mourns? For the world whose wildest
 ways he trod,
 And smiled their dangers down that coiled
 and curled
 Against him, knows him now less man
 than god.

Our demigod of daring, keenest-eyed
 To read and deepest read in earth's dim
 things,
 A spirit now whose body of death has died
 And left it mightier yet in eyes and wings,

The sovereign seeker of the world, who
 now
 Hath sought what world the light of
 death may show,
 Hailed once with me the crowns that load
 thy brow,
 Crags dark as midnight, columns bright
 as snow.

Thy steep small Siena, splendid and content
 As shines the mightier city's Tuscan
 pride
 Which here its face reflects in radiance,
 pent
 By narrower bounds from towering side
 to side,

Set fast between the ridged and foamless
 waves
 Of earth more fierce and fluctuant than
 the sea,
 The fearless town of towers that hails and
 braves
 The heights that gird, the sun that brands
 Le Puy;

The huddled churches clinging on the
 cliffs
 As birds alighting might for storm's sake
 cling,

Moored to the rocks as tempest-harried
skiffs

To perilous refuge from the loud wind's
wing;

The stairs on stairs that wind and change
and climb

Even up to the utmost crag's edge curved
and curled,

Fore bright than vision, more than faith
sublime,

Strange as the light and darkness of the
world;

Strange as are night and morning, stars and
sun,

And washed from west and east by day's
deep tide,

Shine yet less fair, when all their heights are
won,

Than sundawn shows thy pillared moun-
tain-side.

Even so the dawn of death, whose light
makes dim

The starry fires that life sees rise and set,
Shows higher than here he shone before us
him

Whom faith forgets not, nor shall fame
forget.

Even so those else unfooted heights we
clomb

Through scudding mist and eddying
whirls of cloud,

Blind as a pilot beaten blind with foam,
And shrouded as a corpse with storm's
grey shroud,

Foot following foot along the sheer straight
ledge

Where space was none to bear the wild
goat's feet

Till blind we sat on the outer footless edge
Where darkling death seemed fain to share
the seat,

The abyss before us, viewless even as time's,
The abyss to left of us, the abyss to
right,

Bid thought now dream how high the freed
soul climbs

That death sets free from change of day
and night.

The might of raging mist and wind whose
wrath

Shut from our eyes the narrowing rock we
trod,

The wondrous world it darkened, made our
path

Like theirs who take the shadow of death
for God.

Yet eastward, veiled in vapour white as snow,
The grim black herbless heights that scorn
the sun

And mock the face of morning rose to show
The work of earth-born fire and earthquake
done.

And half the world was haggard night,
wherein

We strove our blind way through: but far
above

Was light that watched the wild mists whirl
and spin,

And far beneath a land worth light and
love.

Deep down the Valley of the Curse, un-
daunted

By shadow and whisper of winds with
sins for wings

And ghosts of crime wherethrough the
heights live haunted

By present sense of past and monstrous
things,

The glimmering water holds its gracious way
Full forth, and keeps one happier hand's-
breadth green

Of all that storm-scathed world whereon the
sway

Sits dark as death of deadlier things un-
seen.

But on the soundless and the viewless river
That bears through night perchance again
to day

The dead whom death and twin-born fame
deliver

From life that dies, and time's inveterate
sway,

No shadow save of falsehood and of fear
That brands the future with the past, and
bids

The spirit wither and the soul grow sere,
Hovers or hangs to cloud life's opening
lids,

If life have eyes to lift again and see,
Beyond the bounds of sensual sight or
breath,

What life incognisable of ours may be
That turns our light to darkness deep as
death.

Priests and the soulless serfs of priests may
swarm

With vulturous acclamation, loud in lies,
About his dust while yet his dust is warm
Who mocked as sunlight mocks their base
blind eyes,

Their godless ghost of godhead, false and
foul

As fear his dam or hell his throne: but we,
Scarce hearing, heed no carrion church-wolf's
howl:

The corpse be theirs to mock; the soul is
free.

Free as ere yet its earthly day was done

It lived above the coil about us curled:
A soul whose eyes were keener than the sun,
A soul whose wings were wider than the
world.

We, sons of east and west, ringed round with
dreams,

Bound fast with visions, girt about with
fears,
Live, trust, and think by chance, while
shadow seems

Light, and the wind that wrecks a hand
that steers.

He, whose full soul held east and west in
poise,

Weighed man with man, and creed of
man's with creed,
And age with age, their triumphs and their
toys,

And found what faith may read not and
may read.

Scorn deep and strong as death and life, that
lit

With fire the smile at lies and dreams out-
worn

Wherewith he smote them, showed sublime
in it

The splendour and the steadfastness of
scorn.

What loftier heaven, what lordlier air, what
space

Illimitable, insuperable, infinite,
Now to that strong-winged soul yields ampler
place

Than passing darkness yields to passing
light,

No dream, no faith can tell us: hope and
fear,

Whose tongues were loud of old as chil-
dren's, now

From babbling fall to silence: change is
here,

And death; dark furrows drawn by time's
dark plough.

Still sunward here on earth its flight was bent,
Even since the man within the child began

To yearn and kindle with superb intent
And trust in time to magnify the man.

Still toward the old garden of the Sun, whose
fruit

The honey-heavy lips of Sophocles
Desired and sang, wherein the unwithering
root

Sprang of all growths that thought brings
forth and sees

Incarnate, bright with bloom or dense with
leaf

Far-shadowing, deep as depth of dawn or
night:

And all were parcel of the garnered sheaf
His strenuous spirit bound and stored
aright.

And eastward now, and ever toward the
dawn,

If death's deep veil by life's bright hand be
rent,

We see, as through the shadow of death with-
drawn,

The imperious soul's indomitable ascent.

But not the soul whose labour knew not
end—

But not the swordman's hand, the crested
head—

The royal heart we mourn, the faultless
friend,

Burton—a name that lives till fame be
dead.

A SEQUENCE OF SONNETS ON THE DEATH OF
ROBERT BROWNING.

I.

THE clearest eyes in all the world they read
With sense more keen and spirit of sight
more true
Than burns and thrills in sunrise, when
the dew
Flames, and absorbs the glory round it shed,
As they the light of ages quick and dead,
Closed now, forsake us: yet the shaft
that slew
Can slay not one of all the works we knew,
Nor death discrown that many-laurelled head.
The works of words whose life seems light-
ning wrought,
And moulded of unconquerable thought,
And quickened with imperishable flame,
Stand fast and shine and smile, assured
that nought
May fade of all their myriad-moulded fame,
Nor England's memory clasp not Brown-
ing's name.
December 13, 1889.

II.

Death, what hast thou to do with one for
whom
Time is not lord, but servant? What least
part
Of all the fire that fed his living heart,
Of all the light more keen than sundawn's
bloom
That lit and led his spirit, strong as doom
And bright as hope, can caught thy breath
may dart
Quench? Nay, thou knowest he knew
thee what thou art,
A shadow born of terror's barren womb,
That brings not forth save shadows. What
art thou,
To dream, albeit thou breathe upon his
brow,
That power on him is given thee,—that
thy breath
Can make him less than love acclaims him
now,
And hears all time sound back the word it
saith?
What part hast thou then in his glory,
Death?

III.

A graceless doom it seems that bids us
grieve:
Venice and winter, hand in deadly hand,
Have slain the lover of her sunbright
strand
And singer of a stormbright Christmas Eve.
A graceless guerdon we that loved receive
For all our love, from that the dearest
land
Love worshipped ever. Blithe and soft
and bland,
Too fair for storm to scathe or fire to cleave,
Shone on our dreams and memories ever-
more
The domes, the towers, the mountains and
the shore
That gird or guard thee, Venice: cold and
black
Seems now the face we loved as he of yore.
We have given thee love—no stint, no
stay, no lack:
What gift, what gift is this thou hast given
us back?

IV.

But he—to him, who knows what gift is
thine,
Death? Hardly may we think or hope,
when we
Pass likewise thither where to-night is he,
Beyond the irremearable outer seas that shine
And darken round such dreams as half
divine
Some sunlit harbour in that starless sea
Where gleams no ship to windward or to
lee,
To read with him the secret of thy shrine.
There too, as here, may song, delight, and
love,
The nightingale, the sea-bird, and the dove,
Fulfil with joy the splendour of the sky
Till all beneath wax bright as all above:
But none of all that search the heavens,
and try
The sun, may match the sovereign eagle's
eye.
December 14.

v.

Among the wondrous ways of men and time
 He went as one that ever found and
 sought
 And bore in hand the lamplike spirit of
 thought
 To illumine with instance of its fire sub-
 lime
 The dusk of many a cloudlike age and clime.
 No spirit in shape of light and darkness
 wrought,
 No faith, no fear, no dream, no rapture,
 nought
 That blooms in wisdom, nought that burns in
 crime,
 No virtue girt and armed and helmed with
 light,
 No love more lovely than the snows are white,
 No serpent sleeping in some dead soul's
 tomb,
 No song-bird singing from some live soul's
 height,
 But he might hear, interpret, or illumine
 With sense invasive as the dawn of doom.

vi.

What secret thing of splendour or of shade
 Surmised in all those wandering ways
 wherein
 Man, led of love and life and death and
 sin,
 Strays, climbs, or cowers, allured, absorbed,
 afraid,
 Might not the strong and sunlike sense invade
 Of that full soul that had for aim to win
 Light, silent over time's dark toil and din,

Life, at whose touch death fades as dead
 things fade?

O spirit of man, what mystery moves in thee
 That he might know not of in spirit, and
 see

The heart within the heart that seems to
 strive,

The life within the life that seems to be,
 And hear, through all thy storms that
 whirl and drive,

The living sound of all men's souls alive?

vii.

He held no dream worth waking: so he said,
 He who stands now on death's triumphal
 steep,

Awakened out of life wherein we sleep
 And dream of what he knows and sees,
 being dead.

But never death for him was dark or dread:
 'Look forth' he bade the soul, and fear
 not. Weep,

All ye that trust not in his truth, and keep
 Vain memory's vision of a vanished head
 As all that lives of all that once was he
 Save that which lightens from his word: but
 we,

Who, seeing the sunset-coloured waters
 roll,

Yet know the sun subdued not of the sea,
 Nor weep nor doubt that still the spirit is
 whole,
 And life and death but shadows of the
 soul.

December 15.

SUNSET AND MOONRISE.

NEW YEAR'S EVE, 1889.

ALL the west, whereon the sunset sealed
 the dead year's glorious grave
 Fast with seals of light and fire and cloud
 that light and fire illumine,
 Glows at heart and kindles earth and
 heaven with joyous blush and bloom,
 Warm and wide as life, and glad of death that
 only slays to save.
 As a tide-reconquered sea-rock lies aflush
 with the influent wave

Lies the light aflush with darkness, lapped
 about by lustrous gloom,
 Even as life with death, and fame with
 time, and memory with the tomb
 Where a dead man hath for vassals Fame the
 serf and Time the slave.

Far from earth as heaven, the steadfast light
 withdrawn, superb, suspense,
 Burns in dumb divine expansion of illimit-
 able flower:

Moonrise whets the shadow's edges keen as
noontide: hence and thence
Glow the presence from us passing,
shines and passes not the power.

Souls arise whose word remembered is as
spirit within the sense:
All the hours are theirs of all the seasons:
death has but his hour.

BIRTHDAY ODE.

AUGUST 6, 1891.

I.

Love and praise, and a length of days whose
shadow cast upon time is light,
Days whose sound was a spell shed round
from wheeling wings as of doves in flight,
Meet in one, that the mounting sun to-day
may triumph, and cast out night.

Two years more than the full fourscore lay
hallowing hands on a sacred head—
Scarce one score of the perfect four uncrowned
of fame as they smiled and fled:
Still and soft and alive aloft their sunlight
says though the suns be dead.

Ere we were or were thought on, ere the love
that gave us to life began,
Fame grew strong with his crescent song, to
greet the goal of the race they ran,
Song with fame, and the lustrous name with
years whose changes acclaimed the man.

II.

Soon, ere time in the rounding rhyme of
choral seasons had hailed us men,
We too heard and acclaimed the word whose
breath was life upon England then—
Life more bright than the breathless light of
soundless noon in a songless glen.

Ah, the joy of the heartstruck boy whose ear
was opened of love to hear!
Ah, the bliss of the burning kiss of song and
spirit, the mounting cheer

Lit with fire of divine desire and love that
knew not if love were fear!

Fear and love as of heaven above and earth
enkindled of heaven were one;
One white flame, that around his name
grew keen and strong as the worldwied
sun;

Awe made bright with implied delight, as
weft with weft of the rainbow spun.

III.

He that fears not the voice he hears and loves
shall never have heart to sing:
All the grace of the sun-god's face that bids
the soul as a fountain spring
Bids the brow that receives it bow, and hail
his likeness on earth as king.

We that knew when the sun's shaft flew
beheld and worshipped, adored and
heard:

Light rang round it of shining sound, whence
all men's hearts were subdued and
stirred:

Joy, love, sorrow, the day, the morrow, took
life upon them in one man's word.

Not for him can the years wax dim, nor
downward swerve on a darkening way:

Upward wind they, and leave behind such
light as lightens the front of May:

Fair as youth and sublime as truth we find
the fame that we hail to-day.

THRENODY.

OCTOBER 6, 1892.

I.

LIFE, sublime and serene when time had
power upon it and ruled its breath,
Changed it, bade it be glad or sad, and hear
what change in the world's ear saith,
Shines more fair in the starrier air whose
glory lightens the dusk of death.

Suns that sink on the wan sea's brink, and
moons that kindle and flame and fade,
Leave more clear for the darkness here the
stars that set not and see not shade
Rise and rise on the lowlier skies by rule of
sunlight and moonlight swayed.

So, when night for his eyes grew bright, his
proud head pillowed on Shakespeare's
breast,
Hand in hand with him, soon to stand where
shine the glories that death loves best,
Passed the light of his face from sight, and
sank sublimely to radiant rest.

II.

Far above us and all our love, beyond all reach
of its voiceless praise,
Shines for ever the name that nevertshall feel
the shade of the changeful days
Fall and chill the delight that still sees winter's
light on it shine like May's.

Strong as death is the dark day's breath whose
blast has withered the life we see

Here where light is the child of night, and
less than visions or dreams are we:
Strong as death; but a word, a breath, a
dream is stronger than death can be.

Strong as truth and superb in youth eternal,
fair as the sundawn's flame
Seen when May on her first-born day bids
earth exult in her radiant name,
Lives, clothed round with its praise and
crowned with love that dies not, his love-
lit fame.

III.

Fairer far than the morning star, and sweet
for us as the songs that rang
Loud through heaven from the choral Seven
when all the stars of the morning sang,
Shines the song that we loved so long—since
first such love in us flamed and sprang.

England glows as a sunlit rose from mead to
mountain, from sea to sea,
Bright with love and with pride above all
taint of sorrow that needs must be,
Needs must live for an hour, and give its
rainbow's glory to lawn and lea.

Not through tears shall the new-born years be-
hold him, crowned with applause of men,
Pass at last from a lustrous past to life that
lightens beyond their ken,
Glad and dead, and from earthward led to
sunward, guided of Imogen.

THE BALLAD OF MELICERTES.

IN MEMORY OF THEODORE DE BANVILLE.

DEATH, a light outshining life, bids heaven
resume
Star by star the souls whose light made
earth divine.
Death, a night outshining day, sees burn and
bloom
Flower by flower, and sun by sun, the fancies
that shine
Deathless, higher than life beheld their
sovereign sign.

Dead Simonides of Ceos, late restored,
Given again of God, again by man de-
plored,
Shone but yestereve, a glory frail as
breath.
Frail? But Fame's breath quickens, kindles,
keeps in ward,
Life so sweet as this that dies and casts off
death.

Mother's love, and rapture of the sea, whose
womb
Breeds eternal life of joy that stings like
brine,
Pride of song, and joy to dare the singer's
doom,
Sorrow soft as sleep and laughter bright as
wine,
Flushed and filled with fragrant fire his lyric
line.
As the sea-shell utters, like a stricken
chord,
Music uttering all the sea's within it stored,
Poet well-beloved, whose praise our sor-
row saith,
So thy songs retain thy soul, and so record
Life so sweet as this that dies and casts off
death.
Side by side we mourned at Gautier's golden
tomb:
Here in spirit now I stand and mourn at
thine.
Yet no breath of death strikes thence, no
shadow of gloom,

Only light more bright than gold of the in-
most mine,
Only steam of incense warm from love's
own shrine.
Not the darkling stream, the sundering
Stygian ford,
Not the hour that smites and severs as a
sword,
Not the night subduing light that per-
isheth,
Smite, subdue, divide from us by doom ab-
horred,
Life so sweet as this that dies and casts off
death.
Prince of song more sweet than honey, lyric
lord,
Not thy France here only mourns a light
adored,
One whose love-lit fame the world in-
heriteth.
Strangers too, now brethren, hail with heart's
accord
Life so sweet as this that dies and casts off
death.

AU TOMBEAU DE BANVILLE.

LA plus douce des voix qui vibraient sous
le ciel
Se tait: les rossignols ailés pleurent le frère
Qui s'envole au-dessus de l'âpre et sombre
terre,
Ne lui laissant plus voir que l'être essentiel,
Esprit qui chante et rit, fleur d'une âme sans
fiel.
L'ombre élyséenne, où la nuit n'est que
lumière,

Revoit, tout revêtu de splendeur douce et
fière,
Mélécerte, poète à la bouche de miel.
Dieux exilés, passants célestes de ce monde,
Dont on entend parfois dans notre nuit pro-
fonde
Vibrer la voix, frémir les ailes, vous savez
S'il vous aima, s'il vous pleura, lui dont la vie
Et le chant rappelaient les vôtres. Recevez
L'âme de Mélécerte affranchie et ravie.

LIGHT: AN EPICEDE.

TO PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

LOVE will not weep because the seal is broken
That sealed upon a life beloved and brief
Darkness, and let but song break through for
token

How deep, too far for even thy song's
relief,
Slept in thy soul the secret springs of
grief.

Thy song may soothe full many a soul here-
after,

As tears, if tears will come, dissolve de-
spair;

As here but late, with smile more bright than
laughter,

Thy sweet strange yearning eyes would
seem to bear

Witness that joy might cleave the clouds of
care.

Two days ago, and love was one with pity
When love gave thought wings toward the
glimmering goal

Where, as a shrine lit in some darkling city,
Shone soft the shrouded image of thy soul:
And now thou art healed of life; thou art
healed, and whole.

Yea, two days since, all we that loved thee
pitied:

And now with wondering love, with shame
of face,

We think how foolish now, how far unfitted,
Should be from us, toward thee who hast
run thy race,

Pity—toward thee, who hast won the pain-
less place;

The painless world of death, yet un beholden
Of eyes that dream what light now light-
ens thine

And will not weep. Thought, yearning
toward those olden

Dear hours that sorrow sees and sees not
shine,

Bows tearless down before a flameless
shrine:

A flameless altar here of life and sorrow
Quenched and consumed together. These
were one,

One thing for thee, as night was one with
morrow

And utter darkness with the sovereign sun:
And now thou seest life, sorrow, and dark-
ness done.

And yet love yearns again to win thee
hither;

Blind love, and loveless, and unworthy
thee:

Here where I watch the hours of darkness
wither

Here where mine eyes were glad and sad
to see

Thine that could see not mine, though
turned on me.

But now, if aught beyond sweet sleep lie
hidden,

And sleep be sealed not fast on dead men's
sight

For ever, thine hath grace for ours forbidden,
And sees us compassed round with change
and night:

Yet light like thine is ours, if love be
light.

THRENODY.

WATCHING here alone by the fire whereat
last year

Sat with me the friend that a week since yet
was near,

That a week has borne so far and hid so
deep,

Woe am I that I may not weep,
May not yearn to behold him here.

Shame were mine, and little the love I bore
him were,

Now to mourn that better he fares than love
may fare

Which desires, and would not have indeed,
its will,

Would not love him so worse than ill,
Would not clothe him again with care.

Yet can love not choose but remember,
hearts but ache,

Eyes but darken, only for one vain thought's
poor sake,

For the thought that by this hearth's now
lonely side

Two fast friends, on the day he died,
Looked once more for his hand to take.

Let thy soul forgive them, and pardon heal
the sin,

Though their hearts be heavy to think what
then had been,

The delight that never while they live may
be—

Love's communion of speech with thee,
Soul and speech with the soul therein.

O my friend, O brother, a glory veiled and
marred!
Never love made moan for a life more evil-
starred.

Was it envy, chance, or chance-compelling
fate,
Whence thy spirit was bruised so late,
Bowed so heavily, bound so hard?

Now released, it may be,—if only love might
know—

Filled and fired with sight, it beholds us
blind and low

With a pity keener yet, if that may be,
Even than ever was this that we
Felt, when love of thee wrought us
woe.

None may tell the depths and the heights of
life and death.

What we may we give thee: a word that sor-
row saith,

And that none will heed save sorrow:
scarce a song.

All we may, who have loved thee long,
Take: the best we can give is breath.

A DIRGE.

A BELL tolls on in my heart
As though in my ears a knell
Had ceased for awhile to swell,
But the sense of it would not part
From the spirit that bears its part
In the chime of the soundless bell.

Ah dear dead singer of sorrow,
The burden is now not thine
That grief bade sound for a sign
Through the songs of the night whose morrow
Has risen, and I may not borrow
A beam from its radiant shrine.

The burden has dropped from thee
That grief on thy life bound fast;
The winter is over and past
Whose end thou wast fain to see.
Shall sorrow not comfort me
That is thine no longer—at last?

Good day, good night, and good morrow,
Men living and mourning say.
For thee we could only pray
That night of the day might borrow
Such comfort as dreams lend sorrow:
Death gives thee at last good day.

A REMINISCENCE.

THE rose to the wind has yielded: all its
leaves
Lie strewn on the graveyard grass, and
all their light
And colour and fragrance leave our sense
and sight
Bereft as a man whom bitter time be-
reaves
Of blossom at once and hope of garnered
sheaves,
Of April at once and August. Day to
night
Calls wailing, and life to death, and depth
to height,

And soul upon soul of man that hears and
grieves.

Who knows, though he see the snow-cold
blossom shed,

If haply the heart that burned within the
rose,

The spirit in sense, the life of life be dead?

If haply the wind that slays with storming
snows

Be one with the wind that quickens? Bow
thine head,

O Sorrow, and commune with thine heart:
who knows?

VIA DOLOROSA.

THE days of a man are threescore years and ten.

The days of his life were half a man's, whom we

Lament, and would yet not bid him back, to be

Partaker of all the woes and ways of men.

Life sent him enough of sorrow: not again

Would anguish of love, beholding him set free,

Bring back the beloved to suffer life and see
No light but the fire of grief that scathed him then.

We know not at all: we hope, and do not fear.

We shall not again behold him, late so near,
Who now from afar above, with eyes alight

And spirit enkindled, haply toward us here

Looks down unforgetful yet of days like night

And love that has yet his sightless face in sight.

February 15, 1887.

I.

TRANSFIGURATION.

BUT half a man's days—and his days were nights.

What hearts were ours who loved him, should we pray

That night would yield him back to dark-ling day,

Sweet death that soothes, to life that spoils and smites?

For now, perchance, life lovelier than the light's

That shed no comfort on his weary way

Shows him what none may dream to see or say

Ere yet the soul may scale those topless heights

Where death lies dead, and triumph. Haply there

Already may his kindling eyesight find

Faces of friends—no face than his more fair—

And first among them found of all his kind

Milton, with crowns from Eden on his hair,

And eyes that meet a brother's now not blind.

II.

DELIVERANCE.

O DEATH, fair Death, sole comforter and sweet,

Nor Love nor Hope can give such gifts as thine.

Sleep hardly shows us round thy shadowy shrine

What roses hang, what music floats, what feet

Pass and what wings of angels. We repeat

Wild words or mild, disastrous or divine,

Blind prayer, blind imprecation, seeing no sign

Nor hearing aught of thee not faint and fleet

As words of men or snowflakes on the wind.

But if we chide thee, saying 'Thou hast sinned, thou hast sinned,

Dark Death, to take so sweet a light away

As shone but late, though shadowed, in our skies,'

We hear thine answer—'Night has given what day

Denied him: darkness hath unsealed his eyes.'

III.

THANKSGIVING.

COULD love give strength to thank thee!

Love can give

Strong sorrow heart to suffer: what we bear

We would not put away, albeit this were

A burden love might cast aside and live.

Love chooses rather pain than palliative,

Sharp thought than soft oblivion. May we dare

So trample down our passion and our prayer

That fain would cling round feet now fugitive

And stay them—so remember, so forget,

What joy we had who had his presence yet,

What griefs were his while joy in him was ours

And grief made weary music of his breath,

As even to hail his best and last of hours

With love grown strong enough to thank thee, Death?

IV.

LIBITINA VERTICORDIA.

SISTER of sleep, healer of life, divine
 As rest and strong as very love may be,
 To set the soul that love could set not
 free,
 To bid the skies that day could bid not
 shine,
 To give the gift that life withheld was thine.
 With all my heart I loved one borne from
 me:
 And all my heart bows down and praises
 thee,
 Death, that hast now made grief not his but
 mine.

O Changer of men's hearts, we would not
 bid thee
 Turn back our hearts from sorrow: this
 alone
 We bid, we pray thee, from thy sovereign
 throne
 And sanctuary sublime where heaven has hid
 thee,
 Give: grace to know of those for whom we
 weep
 That if they wake their life is sweet as sleep.

V.

THE ORDER OF RELEASE.

THOU canst not give it. Grace enough is
 ours
 To know that pain for him has fallen on
 rest.
 The worst we know was his on earth: the
 best,
 We fain would think,—a thought no fear
 deflowers—
 Is his, released from bonds of rayless hours.
 Ah, turn our hearts from longing; bid our
 quest
 Cease, as content with failure. This thy
 guest
 Sleeps, vexed no more of time's imperious
 powers,
 The spirit of hope, the spirit of change and
 loss,
 The spirit of love bowed down beneath his
 cross,
 Nor now needs comfort from the strength
 of song.

Love, should he wake, bears now no cross
 for him:
 Dead hope, whose living eyes like his were
 dim,
 Has brought forth better comfort, strength
 more strong.

VI.

PSYCHAGOGOS.

As Greece of old acclaimed thee God and
 man,
 So, Death, our tongue acclaims thee: yet
 wast thou
 Hailed of old Rome as Romans hail thee
 now,
 Goddess and woman. Since the sands first
 ran
 That told when first man's life and death
 began,
 The shadows round thy blind ambiguous
 brow
 Have mocked the votive plea, the pleading
 vow
 That sought thee sorrowing, fain to bless
 or ban.

But stronger than a father's love is thine,
 And gentler than a mother's. Lord and
 God,
 Thy staff is surer than the wizard rod
 That Hermes bare as priest before thy shrine
 And herald of thy mercies. We could
 give
 Nought, when we would have given: thou
 bidst him live.

VII.

THE LAST WORD.

So many a dream and hope that went and
 came,
 So many and sweet, that love thought like
 to be,
 Of hours as bright and soft as those for
 me
 That made our hearts for song's sweet love
 the same,
 Lie now struck dead, that hope seems one
 with shame.
 O Death, thy name is Love: we know it,
 and see
 The witness: yet for very love's sake we
 Can hardly bear to mix with thine his name.

Philip, how hard it is to bid thee part
 Thou knowest, if aught thou knowest where
 now thou art
 Of us that loved and love thee. None
 may tell

What none but knows—how hard it is to
 say
 The word that seals up sorrow, darkens day,
 And bids fare forth the soul it bids fare-
 well.

IN MEMORY OF AURELIO SAFFI.

THE wider world of men that is not ours
 Receives a soul whose life on earth was
 light.
 Though darkness close the date of human
 hours,
 Love leads the spirit and sense of life in
 sight,
 That may not, even though death bid fly,
 take flight.
 Faith, love, and hope fulfilled with memory,
 see
 As clear and dear as life could bid it be
 The present soul that is and is not he.

He, who held up the shield and sword of
 Rome
 Against the ravening brood of recreant
 France,
 Beside the man of men whom heaven took
 home
 When earth beheld the spring's first eye-
 beams glance
 And life and winter seemed alike a trance
 Eighteen years since, in sight of heaven and
 spring
 That saw the soul above all souls take
 wing,
 He too now hears the heaven we hear not
 sing.

He too now dwells where death is dead, and
 stands
 Where souls like stars exult in life to be:
 Whence all who linked heroic hearts and
 hands
 Shine on our sight, and give it strength to
 see
 What hope makes fair for all whom faith
 makes free:
 Free with such freedom as we find in sleep,
 The light sweet shadow of death, when dreams
 are deep
 And high as heaven whence light and light-
 ning leap.

And scarce a month yet gone, his living
 hand
 Writ loving words that sealed me friend of
 his.
 Arc heaven and earth as near as sea to
 strand?
 May life and death as bride and bridegroom
 kiss?
 His last month's written word abides, and
 is;
 Clear as the sun that lit through storm and
 strife
 And darkling days when hope took fear to
 wife
 The faith whose fire was light of all his
 life.

A life so fair, so pure of earthlier leaven,
 That none hath won through higher and
 harder ways
 The deathless life of death which earth calls
 heaven;
 Heaven, and the light of love on earth,
 and praise
 Of silent memory through subsiding days
 Wherein the light subsides not whence the
 past
 Feeds full with life the future. Time holds
 fast
 Their names whom faith forgets not, first
 and last.

Forget? The dark forgets not dawn, nor we
 The suns that sink to rise again, and shine
 Lords of live years and ages. Earth and sea
 Forget not heaven that makes them seem
 divine,
 Though night put out their fires and bid
 their shrine
 Be dark and pale as storm and twilight.
 Day,
 Not night, is everlasting: life's full sway
 Bids death bow down as dead, and pass
 away.

What part has death in souls that past all
 fear
 Win heavenward their supernal way, and
 smite
 With scorn sublime as heaven such dreams
 as here
 Plague and perplex with cloud and fire the
 light
 That leads men's waking souls from glim-
 mering night
 To the awless heights of day, whereon man's
 awe,
 Transfigured, dies in rapture, seeing the
 law
 Sealed of the sun that earth arising saw?
 Faith, justice, mercy, love, and heaven-born
 hate
 That sets them all on fire and bids them be
 More than soft words and dreams that wake
 too late,
 Shone living through the lordly life that
 we
 Beheld, revered, and loved on earth, while
 he
 Dwelt here, and bade our eyes take light
 thereof;
 Light as from heaven that flamed or smiled
 above
 In light or fire whose very hate was love.
 No hate of man, but hate of hate whose foam
 Sheds poison forth from tongues of snakes
 and priests,
 And stains the sickening air with steams
 whence Rome
 Now feeds not full the God that slays and
 feasts;
 For now the fangs of all the ravenous
 beasts
 That ramped about him, fain of prayer and
 prey,
 Fulfil their lust no more: the tide of day
 Swells, and compels him down the deathward
 way.

Night sucks the Church its creature down,
 and hell
 Yawns, heavens, and yearns to clasp its
 loathliest child
 Close to the breasts that bore it. All the
 spell
 Whence darkness saw the dawn in heaven
 defiled
 Is dumb as death: the lips that lied and
 smiled
 Wax white for fear as ashes. She that bore
 The banner up of darkness now no more
 Sheds night and fear and shame from shore
 to shore.
 When they that cast her kingdom down
 were born,
 North cried on south and east made moan
 to west
 For hopes that love had hardly heart to
 mourn,
 For Italy that was not. Kings on quest,
 By priests whose blessings burn as curses
 blest,
 Made spoil of souls and bodies bowed and
 bound,
 Hunted and harried, leashed as horse or
 hound,
 And hopeless of the hope that died unfound.
 And now that faith has brought forth fruit
 to time,
 How should not memory praise their
 names, and hold
 Their record even as Dante's life sublime,
 Who bade his dream, found fair and false
 of old,
 Live? Not till earth and heaven be dead
 and cold
 May man forget whose work and will made
 one
 Italy, fair as heaven or freedom won,
 And left their fame to shine beside her sun.

April 1890.

THE FESTIVAL OF BEATRICE.

DANTE, sole standing on the heavenward
 height,
 Beheld and heard one saying, 'Behold
 me well:
 I am, I am Beatrice.' Heaven and hell
 Kept silence, and the illimitable light

Of all the stars was darkness in his sight
 Whose eyes beheld her eyes again, and fell
 Shame-stricken. Since her soul took flight
 to dwell
 In heaven, six hundred years have taken
 flight.

And now that heavenliest part of earth whereon Shines yet their shadow as once their pres- ence shone To her bears witness for his sake, as he	For hers bare witness when her face was gone: No slave, no hospice now for grief—but free From shore to mountain and from Alp to sea.
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THE MONUMENT OF GIORDANO BRUNO.

I.	II.
NOT from without us, only from within, Comes or can ever come upon us light Whereby the soul keeps ever truth in sight. No truth, no strength, no comfort man may win, No grace for guidance, no release from sin, Save of his own soul's giving. Deep and bright As fire enkindled in the core of night Burns in the soul where once its fire has been The light that leads and quickens thought, inspired To doubt and trust and conquer. So he said Whom Sidney, flower of England, lordliest head Of all we love, loved: but the fates re- quired A sacrifice to hate and hell, ere fame Should set with his in heaven Giordano's name.	Cover thine eyes and weep, O child of hell, Grey spouse of Satan, Church of name abhorred. Weep, withered harlot, with thy weeping lord, Now none will buy the heaven thou hast to sell At price of prostituted souls, and swell Thy loveless list of lovers. Fire and sword No more are thine: the steel, the wheel, the cord, The flames that rose round living limbs, and fell In lifeless ash and ember, now no more Approve thee godlike. Rome, redeemed at last From all the red pollution of thy past, Acclaims the grave bright face that smiled of yore Even on the fire that caught it round and clomb To cast its ashes on the face of Rome. June 9, 1889.

LIFE IN DEATH.

HE should have followed who goes forth before us, Last born of us in life, in death first-born: The last to lift up eyes against the morn, The first to see the sunset. Life, that bore us Perchance for death to comfort and restore us, Of him hath left us here awhile forlorn, For him is as a garment overworn, And time and change, with suns and stars in chorus,	Silent. But if, beyond all change or time, A law more just, more equal, more sublime Than sways the surge of life's loud sterile sea Sways that still world whose peace environs him, Where death lies dead as night when stars wax dim, Above all thought or hope of ours is he. August 2, 1891.
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EPICEDÉ.

As a vesture shalt thou change them, said
the prophet,
And the raiment that was flesh is turned to
dust;
Dust and flesh and dust again the likeness
of it,
And the fine gold woven and worn of youth
is rust.
Hours that wax and wane salute the shade
and scoff it,
That it knows not aught it doth nor aught
it must:
Day by day the speedling soul makes haste to
doff it,
Night by night the pride of life resigns its
trust.
Sleep, whose silent notes of song loud life's
derange not,
Takes the trust in hand awhile as angels
may:
Joy with wings that rest not, grief with wings
that range not,
Guard the gates of sleep and waking, gold
or grey.
Joys that joys estrange, and griefs that griefs
estrange not,
Day that years for night, and night that
years for day,
As a vesture shalt thou change them, and
they change not,
Seeing that change may never change or
pass away.
Life of death makes question, 'What art thou
that changest?
What am I, that fear should trust or faith
should doubt?
I that lighten, thou that darkenest and es-
trangest,
Is it night or day that girds us round about?
Light and darkness on the ways wherein thou
rangest
Seen as one, and beams as clouds they put
to rout.
Strange is hope, but fear of all things born
were strangest,
Seeing that none may strive with change to
cast it out.
'Change alone stands fast, thou sayest, O
death: I know not:

What art thou, my brother death, that thou
shouldst know?
Men may reap no fruits of fields wherein they
sow not;
Hope or fear is all the seed we have to sow.
Winter seals the sacred springs up that they
flow not:
Wind and sun and change unbind them,
and they flow.
Am I thou or art thou I? The years that
show not
Pass, and leave no sign when time shall be
to show.'
Hope makes suit to faith lest fear give ear to
sorrow:
Doubt strews dust upon his head, and goes
his way.
All the golden hope that life of death would
borrow,
How, if death require again, may life re-
pay?
Earth endures no darkness whence no light
yearns thorough;
God in man as light in darkness lives, they
say:
Yet, would midnight take assurance of the
morrow,
Who shall pledge the faith or seal the bond
of day?
Darkness, mute or loud with music or with
mourning,
Starry darkness, winged with wind or
clothed with calm,
Dreams no dream of grief or fear or wrath or
warning,
Bears no sign of race or goal or strife or
palm.
Word of blessing, word of mocking or of
scorning,
Knows it none, nor whence its breath sheds
blight or balm.
Yet a little while, and hark, the psalm of
morning:
Yet a little while, and silence takes the
psalm.
All the comfort, all the worship, all the won-
der,
All the light of love that darkness holds in
fee,

All the song that silence keeps or keeps not
under,
Night, the soul that knows gives thanks
for all to thee.
Far beyond the gates that morning strikes in
sunder,

Hopes that grief makes holy, dreams that
fear sets free,
Far above the throne of thought, the lair of
thunder,
Silent shines the word whose utterance fills
the sea.

MEMORIAL VERSES ON THE DEATH OF WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

A LIFE more bright than the sun's face, bowed
Through stress of season and coil of cloud,
Sets: and the sorrow that casts out fear
Scarce deems him dead in his chill shroud,

Dead on the breast of the dying year,
Poet and painter and friend, thrice dear
For love of the suns long set, for love
Of song that sets not with sunset here,

For love of the fervent heart, above
Their sense who saw not the swift light move
That filled with sense of the loud sun's lyre
The thoughts that passion was fain to prove

In fervent labour of high desire
And faith that leapt from its own quenched
pyre
Alive and strong as the sun, and caught
From darkness light, and from twilight fire.

Passion, deep as the depths unsought
Whence faith's own hope may redeem us
nought,
Filled full with ardour of pain sublime
His mourning song and his mounting thought.

Elate with sense of a sterner time,
His hand's flight clomb as a bird's might
climb

Calvary: dark in the darkling air
That shrank for fear of the crowning crime,

Three crosses rose on the hillside bare,
Shown scarce by grace of the lightning's glare
That clove the veil of the temple through
And smote the priests on the threshold there.

The soul that saw it, the hand that drew.
Whence light as thought's or as faith's glance
flew,

And stung to life the sepulchral past,
And bade the stars of it burn anew,

Held no less than the dead world fast
The light live shadows about them cast,
The likeness living of dawn and night,
The days that pass and the dreams that
last.

Thought, clothed round with sorrow as light,
Dark as a cloud that the moon turns bright,
Moved, as a wind on the striving sea,
That yearns and quickens and flags in flight,

Through forms of colour and song that he
Who fain would have set its wide wings free
Cast round it, clothing or chaining hope
With lights that last not and shades that
flee.

Scarce in song could his soul find scope,
Scarce the strength of his hand might ope
Art's inmost gate of her sovereign shrine,
To cope with heaven as a man may cope.

But high as the hope of a man may shine
The faith, the fervour, the life divine
That thrills our life and transfigures, rose
And shone resurgent, a sunbright sign,

Through shapes whereunder the strong soul
glows
And fills them full as a sunlit rose
With sense and fervour of life, whose light
The fool's eye knows not, the man's eye
knows.

None that can read or divine aright
The scriptures writ of the soul may slight
The strife of a strenuous soul to show
More than the craft of the hand may write.

None may slight it, and none may know
 How high the flames that aspire and glow
 From heart and spirit and soul may climb
 And triumph; higher than the souls lie low

Whose hearing hears not the livelong rhyme,
 Whose eyesight sees not the light sublime,
 That shines, that sounds, that ascends and
 lives
 Unquenched of change, unobscured of time.

A long life's length, as a man's life gives
 Space for the spirit that soars and strives
 To strive and soar, has the soul shone
 through
 That heeds not whither the world's wind
 drives

Now that the days and the ways it knew
 Are strange, are dead as the dawn's grey dew
 At high midnight of the mounting day
 That mocks the might of the dawn it slew.

Yet haply may not—and haply may—
 No sense abide of the dead sun's ray
 Wherein the soul that outsoars us now
 Rejoiced with ours in its radiant sway.

Hope may hover, and doubt may bow,
 Dreaming. Haply—they dream not how—
 Not life but death may indeed be dead
 When silence darkens the dead man's
 brow.

Hope, whose name is remembrance, fed
 With love that lightens from seasons fled,
 Dreams, and craves not indeed to know,
 That death and life are as souls that
 wed.

But change that falls on the heart like
 snow
 Can chill not memory nor hope, that show
 The soul, the spirit, the heart and head,
 Alive above us who strive below.

AN OLD SAYING.

MANY waters cannot quench love,
 Neither can the floods drown it.
 Who shall snare or slay the white dove
 Faith, whose very dreams crown it,
 Gird it round with grace and peace, deep,
 Warm, and pure, and soft as sweet sleep?
 Many waters cannot quench love,
 Neither can the floods drown it.

Set me as a seal upon thine heart,
 As a seal upon thine arm.
 How should we behold the days depart
 And the nights resign their charm?
 Love is as the soul: though hate and fear
 Waste and overthrow, they strike not here.
 Set me as a seal upon thine heart,
 As a seal upon thine arm.

A MOSS-ROSE.

If the rose of all flowers be the rarest
 That heaven may adore from above,
 And the fervent moss-rose be the fairest
 That sweetens the summer with love,

Can it be that a fairer than any
 Should blossom afar from the tree?
 Yet one, and a symbol of many,
 Shone sudden for eyes that could see.

In the grime and the gloom of November
 The bliss and the bloom of July
 Bade autumn rejoice and remember
 The balm of the blossoms gone by.

Would you know what moss-rose now it maybe
 That puts all the rest to the blush,
 The flower was the face of a baby,
 The moss was a bonnet of plush.

TO A CAT.

I.

STATELY, kindly, lordly friend,
 Condescend
 Here to sit by me, and turn
 Glorious eyes that smile and burn,
 Golden eyes, love's lustrous meed,
 On the golden page I read.

All your wondrous wealth of hair,
 Dark and fair,
 Silken-shaggy, soft and bright
 As the clouds and beams of night,
 Pays my reverent hand's caress
 Back with friendlier gentleness.

Dogs may fawn on all and some
 As they come;
 You, a friend of loftier mind,
 Answer friends alone in kind.
 Just your foot upon my hand
 Softly bids it understand.

Morning round this silent sweet
 Garden-seat
 Sheds its wealth of gathering light,
 Thrills the gradual clouds with might,
 Changes woodland, orchard, heath,
 Lawn, and garden there beneath.

Fair and dim they gleamed below:
 Now they glow
 Deep as even your sunbright eyes,
 Fair as even the wakening skies.
 Can it not or can it be
 Now that you give thanks to see?

May not you rejoice as I,
 Seeing the sky
 Change to heaven revealed, and bid

Earth reveal the heaven it hid
 All night long from stars and moon,
 Now the sun sets all in tune?

What within you wakes with day
 Who can say?
 All too little may we tell,
 Friends who like each other well,
 What might haply, if we might,
 Bid us read our lives aright.

II.

Wild on woodland ways your sires
 Flashed like fires;
 Fair as flame and fierce and fleet
 As with wings on wingless feet
 Shone and sprang your mother, free,
 Bright and brave as wind or sea.

Free and proud and glad as they,
 Here to-day
 Rests or roams their radiant child,
 Vanquished not, but reconciled,
 Free from curb of aught above
 Save the lovely curb of love.

Love through dreams of souls divine
 Fain would shine
 Round a dawn whose light and song
 Then should right our mutual wrong—
 Speak, and seal the love-lit law
 Sweet Assisi's seer foresaw.

Dreams were theirs; yet haply may
 Dawn a day
 When such friends and fellows born,
 Seeing our earth as fair at morn,
 May for wiser love's sake see
 More of heaven's deep heart than we.

HAWTHORN DYKE.

ALL the golden air is full of balm and bloom
 Where the hawthorns line the shelving
 dyke with flowers.

Joyous children born of April's happiest
 hours,
 High and low they laugh and lighten, know-
 ing their doom

Bright as brief—to bless and cheer they know
 not whom,
 Heed not how, but washed and warmed
 with suns and showers
 Smile, and bid the sweet soft gradual banks
 and bowers
 Thrill with love of sunlit fire or starry gloom.

All our moors and lawns all round rejoice;
 but here
 All the rapturous resurrection of the
 year
 Finds the radiant utterance perfect, sees
 the word

Spoken, hears the light that speaks it. Far
 and near,
 All the world is heaven: and man and
 flower and bird
 Here are one at heart with all things seen
 and heard.

THE BROTHERS.

THERE were twa brethren fell on strife;
 Sweet fruits are sair to gather
 The tane has reft his brother of life,
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

There were twa brethren fell to fray;
 Sweet fruits are sair to gather
 The tane is clad in a cloak of clay;
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

O loud and loud was the live man's cry,
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 'Would God the dead and the slain were I!'
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

'O sair was the wrang and sair the fray,'
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 'But liefer had love be slain than slay.'
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

'O sweet is the life that sleeps at hame,'
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 'But I maun wake on a far sea's faem.'
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

'And women are fairest of a' things fair,'
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 'But never shall I kiss woman mair.'
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

Between the birk and the aik and the thorn
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 He's laid his brother to lie forlorn:
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

Between the bent and the burn and the broom
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 He's laid him to sleep till dawn of doom:
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

He's tane him owre the waters wide,
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)

Afar to fleet and afar to bide:
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

His hair was yellow, his cheek was red,
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 When he set his face to the wind and fled:
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

His banes were stark and his een were
 bright
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 When he set his face to the sea by night:
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

His cheek was wan and his hair was grey
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 When he came back hame frae the wide
 world's way:
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

His banes were weary, his een were dim,
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 And nae man lived and had mind of him:
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

'O whatten a wreck wad they seek on land'
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 'That they bouk the turf to the seaward
 hand?'
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

'O whatten a prey wad they think to take'
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 'That they delve the dykes for a dead man's
 sake?'
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

A bane of the dead in his hand he's tane;
 Sweet fruits are sair to gather:
 And the red blood brak frae the dead white
 bane.
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

He's cast it forth of his auld faint hand;
 Sweet fruits are sair to gather:
 And the red blood ran on the wan wet sand.
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

'O whatten a slayer is this,' they said,
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 That the straik of his hand should raise his
 dead?
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

'O weel is me for the sign I take'
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 'That now I may die for my auld sin's sake.'
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

'For the dead was in wait now fifty year,'
 (Sweet fruits are sair to gather)
 'And now shall I die for his blood's sake
 here.'
 And the wind wears owre the heather.

JACOBITE SONG.

Now who will speak, and lie not,
 And pledge not life, but give?
 Slaves herd with herded cattle:
 The dawn grows bright for battle,
 And if we die, we die not;
 And if we live, we live.

The faith our fathers fought for,
 The kings our fathers knew,
 We fight but as they fought for:
 We seek the goal they sought for,
 The chance they hailed and knew,
 The praise they strove and wrought for,
 To leave their blood as dew
 On fields that flower anew.

Men live that serve the stranger;
 Hounds live that huntsmen tame:
 These life-days of our living
 Are days of God's good giving
 Where death smiles soft on danger
 And life scowls dark on shame.

And what would you do other,
 Sweet wife, if you were I?
 And how should you be other,
 My sister, than your brother,
 If you were man as I,
 Born of our sire and mother,
 With choice to cower and fly,
 And chance to strike and die?

No churl's our oldworld name is,
 The lands we leave are fair:
 But fairer far than these are,

But wide as all the seas are,
 But high as heaven the fame is
 That if we die we share.

Our name the night may swallow,
 Our lands the churl may take:
 But night nor death may swallow,
 Nor hell's nor heaven's dim hollow,
 The star whose height we take,
 The star whose light we follow
 For faith's unfaltering sake
 Till hope that sleeps awake.

Soft hope's light lure we serve not,
 Nor follow, fain to find:
 Dark time's last word may smite her
 Dead, ere man's falsehood blight her:
 But though she die, we swerve not,
 Who cast not eye behind.

Faith speaks when hope dissembles:
 Faith lives when hope lies dead:
 If death as life dissembles,
 And all that night assembles
 Of stars at dawn lie dead,
 Faint hope that smiles and trembles
 May tell not well for dread:
 But faith has heard it said.

Now who will fight, and fly not,
 And grudge not life to give?
 And who will strike beside us,
 If life's or death's light guide us?
 For if we live, we die not,
 And if we die, we live.

THE BALLAD OF DEAD MEN'S BAY.

THE sea swings owre the slants of sand,
 All white with winds that drive
 The sea swirls up to the still dim strand,
 Where nae man comes alive.

At the grey soft edge of the fruitless surf
 A light flame sinks and springs.
 At the grey soft rim of the flowerless turf
 A low flame leaps and clings.

What light is this on a sunless shore,
 What gleam on a starless sea?
 Was it earth's or hell's waste womb that
 bore
 Such births as should not be?

As lithe snakes turning, as bright stars burn-
 ing,
 They bicker and beckon and call;
 As wild waves churning, as wild winds yearn-
 ing,
 They flicker and climb and fall.

A soft strange cry from the landward rings—
 'What ails the sea to shine?'
 A keen sweet note from the spray's rim
 springs—
 'What fires are these of thine?'

A soul am I that was born on earth
 For ae day's waesome span:
 Death bound me fast on the bourn of
 birth
 Ere I were christened man.

'A light by night, I fleet and fare
 Till the day of wrath and woe;
 On the hems of earth and the skirts of air
 Winds hurl me to and fro.'

'O well is thee, though the weird be strange
 That bids thee flit and flee;
 For hope is child of the womb of change,
 And hope keeps watch with thee.

'When the years are gone, and the time is
 come
 God's grace may give thee grace;
 And thy soul may sing, though thy soul were
 dumb
 And shine before God's face.

'But I, that lighten and revel and roll
 With the foam of the plunging sea,
 No sign is mine of a breathing soul
 That God should pity me.

'Nor death, nor heaven, nor hell, nor birth
 Hath part in me nor mine:
 Strong lords are these of the living earth
 And loveless lords of thine.

'But I that know nor lord nor life
 More sure than storm or spray,
 Whose breath is made of sport and strife,
 Whereon shall I find stay?'

'And wouldst thou change thy doom with
 me,
 Full fain with thee would I:
 For the life that lightens and lifts the sea
 Is more than earth or sky.

'And what if the day of doubt and doom
 Shall save nor smite not me?
 I would not rise from the slain world's tomb
 If there be no more sea.

'Take he my soul that gave my soul,
 And give it thee to keep;
 And me, while seas and stars shall roll
 Thy life that falls on sleep.'

That word went up through the mirk mid
 sky,
 And even to God's own ear:
 And the Lord was ware of the keen twin cry,
 And wroth was he to hear.

He's tane the soul of the unsained child
 'That fled to death from birth;
 He's tane the light of the wan sea wild,
 And bid it burn on earth.

He's given the ghaist of the babe new-born
 The gift of the water-sprite,
 To ride on revel from morn to morn
 And roll from night to night.

He's given the sprite of the wild wan sea
 The gift of the new-born man,
 A soul for ever to bide and be
 When the years have filled their span.

When a year was gone and a year was come,
 O loud and loud cried they--
 'For the lee-lang year thou hast held us dumb
 Take now thy gifts away!'

O loud and lang they cried on him,
 And sair and sair they prayed:
 'Is the face of thy grace as the night's face
 grim
 For those thy wrath has made?'

A cry more bitter than tears of men
 From the rim of the dim grey sea;—
 'Give me my living soul again,
 The soul thou gavest me,
 The doom and the dole of kindly men,
 To bide my weird and be!'

A cry more keen from the wild low land
 Than the wail of waves that roll;—
 'Take back the gift of a loveless hand,
 Thy gift of doom and dole,
 The weird of men that bide on land;
 Take from me, take my soul!'

The hands that smite are the hands tha
 spare;

They build and break the tomb;
 They turn to darkness and dust and air
 The fruits of the waste earth's womb;
 But never the gift of a granted prayer,
 The dole of a spoken doom.

Winds may change at a word unheard,
 But none may change the tides:
 The prayer once heard is as God's own word;
 The doom once dealt abides.

And ever a cry goes up by day,
 And ever a wail by night;
 And nae ship comes by the weary bay
 But her shipmen hear them wail and pray,
 And see with earthly sight
 The twofold flames of the twin lights play
 Where the sea-banks green and the sea-floods
 grey
 Are proud of peril and fain of prey,
 And the sand quakes ever; and ill fare they
 That look upon that light.

DEDICATION.

1893.

THE sea of the years that endure not
 Whose tide shall endure till we die
 And know what the seasons assure not,
 If death be or life be a lie,
 Sways hither the spirit and thither,
 A waif in the swing of the sea
 Whose wrecks are of memories that wither
 As leaves of a tree.

We hear not and hail not with greeting
 The sound of the wings of the years,
 The storm of the sound of them beating,
 That none till it pass from him hears:
 But tempest nor calm can imperil
 The treasures that fade not or fly;
 Change bids them not change and be sterile,
 Death bids them not die.

Hearts plighted in youth to the royal
 High service of hope and of song,
 Sealed fast for endurance as loyal,
 And proved of the years as they throng,

Conceive not, believe not, and fear not
 That age may be other than youth;
 That faith and that friendship may hear not
 And utter not truth.

Not yesterday's light nor to-morrow's
 Gleams nearer or clearer than gleams,
 Though joys be forgotten and sorrows
 Forgotten as changes of dreams,
 The dawn of the days unforgotten
 That noon could eclipse not or slay,
 Whose fruits were as children begotten
 Of dawn upon day.

The years that were flowerful and fruitless,
 The years that were fruitful and dark,
 The hopes that were radiant and rootless,
 The hopes that were winged for their mark,
 Lie soft in the sepulchres fashioned
 Of hours that arise and subside,
 Absorbed and subdued and impassioned,
 In pain or in pride.

But far in the night that entombs them
 The starshine as sunshine is strong,
 And clear through the cloud that resumes
 them

Remembrance, a light and a song,
 Rings lustrous as music and hovers
 As birds that impend on the sea,
 And thoughts that their prison-house covers
 Arise and are free.

Forgetfulness deep as a prison
 Holds days that are dead for us fast
 Till the sepulchre sees rearisen
 The spirit whose reign is the past,
 Disentrammelled of darkness, and kindled
 With life that is mightier than death,
 When the life that obscured it has dwindled
 And passed as a breath.

But time nor oblivion may darken
 Remembrance whose name will be joy
 While memory forgets not to hearken,
 While manhood forgets not the boy
 Who heard and exulted in hearing
 The songs of the sunrise of youth
 Ring radiant above him, unfearing
 And joyous as truth.

Truth, winged and enkindled with rapture
 And sense of the radiance of yore,
 Fulfilled you with power to recapture
 What never might singer before—
 The life, the delight, and the sorrow
 Of troublous and chivalrous years
 That knew not of night or of morrow,
 Of hopes or of fears.

But wider the wing and the vision
 That quicken the spirit have spread
 Since memory beheld with derision
 Man's hope to be more than his dead.
 From the mists and the snows and the thun-
 ders
 Your spirit has brought for us forth
 Light, music, and joy in the wonders
 And charms of the north.

The wars and the woes and the glories
 That quicken and lighten and rain
 From the clouds of its chronicled stories,
 The passion, the pride, and the pain,
 Whose echoes were mute and the token
 Was lost of the spells that they spake,
 Rise bright at your bidding, unbroken
 Of ages that break.

For you, and for none of us other,
 Time is not: the dead that must live
 Hold commune with you as a brother
 By grace of the life that you give.
 The heart that was in them is in you,
 Their soul in your spirit endures:
 The strength of their song is the sinew
 Of this that is yours.

Hence is it that life, everlasting
 As light and as music, abides
 In the sound of the surge of it, casting
 Sound back to the surge of the tides,
 Till sons of the sons of the Norsemen
 Watch, hurtling to windward and lee,
 Round England, unbacked of her horsemen,
 The steeds of the sea.

SPECIMENS OF MODERN POETS

THE HEPTALOGIA

OR

THE SEVEN AGAINST SENSE

A CAP WITH SEVEN BELLS

P R E F A C E

To the collector of First Editions *The Heptalogia* has long been known as one of the less accessible volumes issued anonymously by Mr. Swinburne. In Mr. Thomas J. Wise's bibliography of the poet the facts are stated with sufficient clearness: it is also made evident that the work is destined by its author to remain *introuvable*.

That a series of such inimitable parodies should be forever restricted to a few undaunted bibliophiles would seem a woeful injustice to every outstanding lover of Letters. The sum total of first rate parody has never run to excess in English literature. *John Jones* is without doubt the choicest example of literary banter in the language.

We have added *Disgust: A Dramatic Monologue*. This is now reprinted from *The Fortnightly Review*, December 1, 1881. It parodies Lord Tennyson's *Despair: A Dramatic Monologue*, which had appeared in *The Nineteenth Century* for November, 1881.

The following is a list of the seven parodies, with the names of the poets to whom they severally apply:

- I. *The Higher Pantheism in a Nutshell* Alfred Tennyson.
- II. *John Jones* Robert Browning.
- III. *The Poet and the Woodlouse* Walt. Whitman.
- IV. *The Person of the House* (Idyl ccclxvi) Coventry Patmore.
- V. *Last Words of a Seventh-rate Poet* Robert, Lord Lytton
("Owen Meredith").
- VI. *Sonnet for a Picture* Dante Gabriel Rossetti.
- VII. *Nephelidia* Algernon Charles Swinburne.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM IN A NUTSHELL.

ONE, who is not, we see: but one, whom we see not, is:

Surely this is not that: but that is assuredly this.

What, and wherefore, and whence? for under is over and under:

If thunder could be without lightning, lightning could be without thunder.

Doubt is faith in the main: but faith, on the whole, is doubt:

We cannot believe by proof: but could we believe without?

Why, and whither, and how? for barley and rye are not clover:

Neither are straight lines curves: yet over is under and over.

Two and two may be four: but four and four are not eight:

Fate and God may be twain: but God is the same thing as fate.

Ask a man what he thinks, and get from a man what he feels:

God, once caught in the fact, shews you a fair pair of heels.

Body and spirit are twins: God only knows which is which:

The soul squats down in the flesh, like a tinker drunk in a ditch.

One and two are not one: but one and nothing is two:

Truth can hardly be false, if falsehood cannot be true.

Once the mastodon was: pterodactyls were common as cocks:

Then the manmoth was God: now is He a prize ox.

Parallels all things are: yet many of these are askew:

You are certainly I: but certainly I am not you.

Springs the rock from the plain, shoots the stream from the rock:

Cocks exist for the hen: but hens exist for the cock.

God, whom we see not, is: and God, who is not, we see:

Fiddle, we know, is diddle: and diddle, we take it, is dee.

JOHN JONES.

I.

AT THE PIANO.

I.

LOVE me and leave me; what love bids retrieve me? can June's fist grasp May?

Leave me and love me; hopes eyed once above me like spring's sprouts, decay;

Fall as the snow falls, when summer leaves grow false—cards packed for storm's play!

II.

Nay, say Decay's self be but last May's elf, wing shifted, eye sheathed—

Changeling in April's crib rocked, who lets 'scape rills locked fast since frost breathed—

Skin cast (think!) adder-like, now bloom bursts bladder like,—bloom frost bequeathed?

III.

Ah, how can fear sit and hear as love hears it grief's heart's cracked grate's screech?

Chance lets the gate sway that opens on hate's way and shews on shame's beach

Crouched like an imp sly change watch sweet love's shrimps lie, a toothful in each.

IV.

Time feels his tooth slip on husks wet from Truth's lip, which drops them and grins—

Shells where no throb stirs of life left in lobsters since joy thrilled their fins—

Hues of the prawn's tail or comb that makes
dawn stale,¹ so red for our sins!

V.

Years blind and deaf use the soul's joys as
refuse, heart's peace as manure,
Reared whence, next June's rose shall bloom
where our moons rose last year, just as
pure:
Moons' ends match roses' ends: men by
beasts' noses' ends mete sin's stink's cure.

VI.

Leaves love last year smelt now feel dead
love's tears melt—flies caught in time's
mesh!
Salt are the dews in which new time breeds
new sin, brews blood and stews flesh,
Next year may see dead more germs than this
weeded and reared them afresh.

VII.

Old times left perish, there's new time to
cherish; life just shifts its tune;
As, when the day dies, earth, half afraid, eyes
the growth of the moon;
Love me and save me, take me or waive me;
death takes one so soon!

II.

BY THE CLIFF.

I.

Is it daytime (guess),
You that feed my soul
To excess
With that light in those eyes
And those curls drawn like a scroll
In that round grave guise?
No or yes?

II.

Oh, the end, I'd say!
Such a foolish thing
(Pure girls' play!)
As a mere mute heart,
Was it worth a kiss, a ring,
This? for two must part—
Not to-day.

III.

Look, the whole sand crawls,
Hums, a heaving hive,
Scrapes and scrawls—
Such a buzz and burst!
Here just one thing's not alive,
One that was at first—
But life palls.

IV.

Yes, my heart, I know,
Just my heart's stone dead—
Yes, just so.
Sick with heat, those worms
Drop down scorched and overfed—
No more need of germs!
Let them go.

V.

Yes, but you now, look,
You, the rouged stage female
With a crook,
Chalked Arcadian sham,
You that made my soul's sleep's dream ail—
Your soul fit to damn?
Shut the book.

III.

ON THE SANDS.

I.

THERE was nothing at all in the case (con-
ceive)
But love; being love, it was not (under-
stand)
Such a thing as the years let fall (believe)
Like the rope's coil dropt from a fisher-
man's hand
When the boat's hauled up—"by your leave!"

II.

So—well! How that crab writhes—leg after
leg
Drawn, as a worm draws ring upon
ring
Gradually, not gladly! Nay, but, Meg,
Is it more than the ransom (say) of a
king
(Take my meaning at least) that I beg?

¹ 'Whose youth and freshness
Wrinkles Apollo's, and makes stale the morning.'—SHAKESPEARE.

III.

Not so! You were ready to learn, I think,
 What the world said! 'He loves you too
 well (suppose)
 For such leanings! These poets, their love's
 mere ink—
 Like a flower, their flame flashes—a rose-
 bud, blows—
 Then it all drops down at a wink!

IV.

'Ah, the instance! A curl of a blossomless
 vine
 The vinedresser passing it sickens to see
 And mutters "Much hope (under God) of
 His wine
 From the branch and the bark of a barren
 tree
 Spring reared not, and winter lets pine—

V.

' "His wine that should glorify (saith He)
 the cup
 That a man beholding (not tasting) might
 say
 'Pour out life at a draught, drain it dry,
 drink it up,
 Give this one thing, and huddle the rest
 away—
 Save the bitch, and who cares for the pup?'

VI.

' "Let it rot then!" which saying, he leaves it
 —we'll guess,
 Feels (if the sap move at all) thus much—
 Yearn, and would blossom, would quicken
 no less,
 Bud at an eye's glance, flower at a touch—
 "Die, perhaps, would you not, for her?—
 "Yes

VII.

'Note the hitch there! That's piteous—so
 much being done,
 (He'll think some day, your lover) so little
 to do!
 Such infinite days to wear out, once begun!
 Since the hand its glove holds, and the foot-
 sole its shoe—
 Overhead too there's always the sun!'

VIII.

Oh, no doubt they had said so, your friends--
 been profuse
 Of good counsel, wise hints—"where the
 trap lurks, walk warily—
 Squeeze the fruit to the core ere you count on
 the juice!
 For the graft may fail, shift, wax, change
 colour, wane, vary, lie—'
 You were cautious, God knows—to what use?

IX.

This crab's wiser, it strikes me—no twist but
 implies life—
 Not a curl but's so fit you could find none
 fitter—
 For the brute from its bruteness looks up
 thus and eyes life—
 Stoop your soul down and listen, you'll
 hear it twitter,
 Laughing lightly,—my crab's life's the wise
 life!

X.

Ah, now, look you—tail foremost, the beast
 sets seaward—
 The sea draws it, sand sucks it—he's wise,
 my crab!
 From the napkin out jumps his one talent—
 good steward,
 Just judge! So a man shirks the smile or
 the stab,
 And sets his sail duly to leeward!

XI.

Trust me? Hardly! I bid you not lean (re-
 mark)
 On my spirit, your spirit—my flesh, your
 flesh—
 Hold my hand, and tread safe through the
 horrible dark—
 Quench my soul as with sprinklings of
 snow, then refresh
 With some blast of new bellows the spark!

XII.

By no means! This were easy (men tell me)
 to say—
 'Give her all, throw your chance up, fall
 back on her heart!'

(Say my friends) 'she must change! after
night follows day—'

No such fool! I am safe set in hell, for my
part—
So let heaven do the worst now he may!

XIII.

What they bid me? Well, this, nothing more
—'Tell her this—'

"You are mine, I yours, though the whole
world fail—"

Though things are not, I know there is one
thing which is—

Though the oars break, there's hope for us
yet—hoist the sail!

Oh, your heart! what's the heart? but your
kiss!"

XIV.

'Then she breaks, she drops down, she lies
flat at your feet—'

'Take her then!' Well, I knew it—what
fools are men!

Take the bee by her horns, will your honey
prove sweet?

Sweet is grass—will you pasture your cows
in a fen?

Oh, if contraries could but once meet!

XV.

Love you call it? Some twitch in the moon's
face (observe)

Wet blink of her eyelid, tear dropt about
dewfall,

Cheek flushed or obscured—does it make the
sky swerve?

Fetch the test, work the question to rags,
bring to proof all—

Find what souls want and bodies deserve!

XVI.

Ah, we know you! Your soul works to infinite
ends,

Frets, uses life up for death's sake, takes
pains,

Flings down love's self—'but you, bear me
witness, my friends!

Have I lost spring? count up (see) the
winter's fresh gains!

Is the shrub spoilt? the pine's hair impends!'

XVII.

What, you'd say—'Mark how God works!
Years crowd, time wears thin,

Earth keeps good yet, the sun goes on,
stars hold their own,

And you'll change, climb past sight of the
world, shift your skin,

Never heeding how life moans—more flesh
now, less bone!"

For that cheek's worn waste outline (death's
grin)

XVIII.

Pleads with time still—"what good if I lose
this? but see—"

(There's the crab gone!) "'I said, 'Though
earth sinks,' " (you perceive?

Ah, true, back there!) your soul now—" 'yet
some vein might be

(Could one find it alive in the heart's core's
pulse, cleave

Through the life-springs where 'you' melts in
'me')—

XIX.

" 'Some true vein of the absolute soul, which
survives

All that flesh runs to waste through'—and
lo, this fails!

Here's death close on us! One life? a million
of lives!

Why choose one sail to watch of these in-
finite sails?

Time's a tennis-play! thank you, no, fives!

XX.

" 'Stop life's ball then!' Such folly! melt
earth down for that,

Till the pure ore eludes you and leaves you
raw scoria?

Pish, the vein's wrong! But you, friends—
come, what were you at

When God spat you out suddenly? what
was the story He

Cut short thus, the growth He laid flat?

XXI.

Wait! the crab's twice alive, mark! Oh,
worthy, your soul,

Of strange ends, great results, novel la-
bours! Take note,

I reject this for one! (ay, now, straight to the hole!

Safe in sand there—your skirts smooth out all as they float!)

I, shirk drinking through flaws in the bowl?

XXII.

Or suppose now that rock's cleft—grim, scored to the quick,

As a man's face kept fighting all life through gets scored,

Mossed and marked with grey purulent leprosies, sick,

Flat and foul as man's life here (be swift with your sword—

Cut the soul out, stuck fast where thorns prick!)

XXIII.

—Say it let the rock's heart out, its meaning, the thing

All was made for, devised, ruled out gradually, planned—

Ah, that sea-shell, perhaps—since it lies, such a ring

Of pure colour, a cup full of sunbeams, to stand

(Say, in Lent) at the priest's hand—(no king!)

XXIV.

Blame the cleft then? Praise rather! So—just a chance gone!

Had you said—'Save the seed and secure souls in flower'—

Ah, how time laughs, years palpitate, pro grapples con,

Till one day you shrug shoulders—'Well, gone, the good hour!

Till one night—'Is God off now? or on?

IV.

UP THE SPOUT.

I.

Hi! Just you drop that! Stop, I say!

Shirk work, think slink off, twist friend's wrist?

Where that spined sand's lined band's the bay—

Lined blind with true sea's blue, as due—

Promising—not to pay?

II.

For the sea's debt leaves wet the sand;

Burst worst fate's weights in one burst gun?

A man's own yacht, blown—What? off land?

Tack back, or veer round here, then—queer!

Reef points, though—understand?

III.

I'm blest if I do. Sigh? be blown!

Love's doves make break life's ropes, eh? Tropes!

Faith's brig, baulked, sides caulked, rides at road;

Hope's grapes befogged, storm-dogged and bogged—

Clogged, water-logged, her load!

IV.

Stowed, by Jove, right and tight, away!

No show now how best plough sea's brow, Wrinkling—breeze quick, tease thick, ere day,

Clear sheer wave's sheen of green, I mean, With twinkling wrinkles—eh?

V.

Sea sprinkles winkles, tinkles light

Shells' bells—boy's joys that hap to snap!

It's just sea's fun, breeze done, to spite

God's rods that scourge her surge, I'd urge—

Not proper, is it—quite?

VI.

Sec, fore and aft, life's craft undone!

Crank plank, split spritsail—mark, sea's lark!

That grey cold sea's old spree, begun

When men lay dark i' the ark, no spark,

All water—just God's fun!

VII.

Not bright, at best, his jest to these

Seemed—screamed, shrieked, wreaked on kin for sin!

When for mirth's yell earth's knell seemed please

Some dumb new grim great whim in him

Made Jews take chalk for cheese.

VIII.

Could God's rods bruise God's Jews? Their
jowls

Bobbed, sobbed, gaped, aped the plaice in
face:

None heard, 'tis odds, his—God's—folk's
howls.

Now, how must I apply, to try
This hookiest-beaked of owls?

IX.

Well, I suppose God knows—I don't.

Time's crimes mark dark men's types, in
stripes

Broad as fen's lands men's hands were wont
Leave grieve unploughed, though proud
and loud

With birds' words—No! he won't!

X.

One never should think good impossible.

Eh? say I'd hide this Jew's oil's cruse—
His shop might hold bright gold, engrossible
By spy—spring's air takes there no care
To wave the heath-flower's glossy bell!

XI.

But gold bells chime in time there, coined—
Gold! Old Sphinx winks there—'Read
my screed!'

Doctrine Jews learn, use, burn for, joined
(Through new craft's stealth) with health
and wealth—

At once all three purloined!

XII.

I rose with dawn, to pawn, no doubt,
(Miss this chance, glance untried aside?)
John's shirt, my—no! Ay, so—the lout!

Let yet the door gape, store on floor
And not a soul about?

XIII.

Such men lay traps, perhaps—and I'm
Weak—meek—mild—child of woe, you
know!

But theft, I doubt, my lout calls crime.
Shrink? Think! Love's dawn in pawn—
you spawn
Of Jewry! Just in time!

V.

OFF THE PIER.

I.

ONE last glance at these sands and stones!
Time goes past men, and lives to his liking,
Steals, and ruins, and sometimes atones.

Why should he be king, though, and why
not I king?

There now, that wind, like a swarm of sick
drones!

II.

Is it heaven or mere earth (come!) that moves
so and moans?

Oh, I knew, when you loved me, my soul
was in flowerage—

Now the frost comes; from prime, though, I
watched through to none,

Read love's litanies over—his age was not
our age!

No more flutes in this world for me now, dear!
trombones.

III.

All that youth once denied and made mouths
at, age owns.

Facts put fangs out and bite us; life stings
and grows viperous;

And times fugues are a hubbub of meaning-
less tones.

Once we followed the piper; now why not
the piper us?

Love, grown grey, plays mere solos; we want
antiphones.

IV.

And we sharpen our wits up with passions for
bones,

Melt down loadstars for magnets, use
women for whetstones,

Learn to bear with dead calms by remember-
ing cyclones,

Snap strings short with sharp thumbnails,
till silence begets tones,

Burn our souls out, shift spirits, turn skins
and change zones;

V.

Then the heart, when all's done with, wakes,
whimpers, intones

Some lost fragment of tune it thought sweet
ere it grew sick;

(Is it life that disclaims this, or death that disowns?)

Mere dead metal, scrawled bars—ah, one touch, you make music!
Love's worth saving, youth doubts, but experience depones.

VI.

Think, what use, when youth's saddle galls bay's back or roan's,
To seek chords on love's keys to strike, other than his chords?

There's an error joy winks at and grief half condones,

Or life's counterpoint grates the C' major of discords—

'Tis man's choice 'twixt sluts rose-crowned and queens age dethrones.

¹ First edition :—

And my face bear his brand—mine, that once bore Love's badge elate!

VII.

I for instance might groan as a bag-pipe groans,

Give the flesh of my heart for sharp sorrows to flagellate,

Grief might grind my cheeks down, age make sticks of my bones,

(Though a queen drowned in tears must be worth more than Madge elate)¹

Rose might turn burdock, and pine-apples cones;

VIII.

My skin might change to a pitiful crone's,

My lips to a lizard's, my hair to weed,

My features, in fact, to a series of loans;

Thus much is conceded; now, you, concede

You would hardly salute me by choice, John Jones?

THE POET AND THE WOODLOUSE.

SAID a poet to a woodlouse—'Thou art certainly my brother;

I discern in thee the markings of the fingers of the Whole;

And I recognize, in spite of all the terrene smut and smother,

In the colours shaded off thee, the suggestions of a soul.

'Yea,' the poet said, 'I smell thee by some passive divination,

I am satisfied with insight of the measure of thine house;

What had happened I conjecture, in a blank and rhythmic passion,

Had the æons thought of making thee a man, and me a louse.

'The broad lives of upper planets, their absorption and digestion,

Food and famine, health and sickness, I can scrutinize and test;

Through a shiver of the senses comes a resonance of question,

And by proof of balanced answer I decide that I am best.

'Man the fleshly marvel, always feels a certain kind of awe stick

To the skirts of contemplation, cramped with nympholeptic weight:

Feels his faint sense charred and branded by the touch of solar caustic,

On the forehead of his spirit feels the footprint of a Fate.'

'Notwithstanding which, O poet,' spake the woodlouse, very blandly,

'I am likewise the created,—I the equipoise of thee;

I the particle, the atom, I behold on either hand lie

The inane of measured ages that were embryos of me.

'I am fed with intimations, I am clothed with consequences,

And the air I breathe is coloured with apocalyptic blush:

Ripest-budded odours blossom out of dim chaotic stench,

And the Soul plants spirit-lilies in sick leagues of human slush.

'I am thrilled half cosmically through by
cryptophantic surgings,
Till the rhythmic hills roar silent through
a spongy kind of blee:
And earth's soul yawns disembowelled of
her pancreatic organs,
Like a madrepore if mesmerized, in rapt
catalepsy.

'And I sacrifice, a Levite—and I palpitate, a
poet;—
Can I close dead ears against the rush and
resonance of things?
Symbols in me breathe and flicker up the
heights of the heroic;
Earth's worst spawn, you said, and cursed
me? look! approve me! I have wings.

'Ah, men's poets! men's conventions crust
you round and swathe you mist-like,
And the world's wheels grind your spirits
down the dust ye overtrod:
We stand sinlessly stark-naked in effulgence
of the Christlight,
And our polecat chokes not cherubs; and
our skunk smells sweet to God.

'For He grasps the pale Created by some
thousand vital handles,
Till a Godshine, bluey winnowed through
the sieve of thunder-storms,

Shimmers up the non-existent round the
churning feet of angels;
And the atoms of that glory may be seraphs,
being worms.

'Friends, your nature underlies us and your
pulses overplay us;
Ye, with social sores unbandaged, can ye
sing right and steer wrong?
For the transient cosmic, rooted in imperish-
able chaos,
Must be kneaded into drastics as material
for a song.

'Eyes once purged from homebred vapours
through humanitarian passion
See that monochrome a despot through a
democratic prism;
Hands that rip the soul up, reeking from
divine evisceration,
Not with priestlike oil anoint him, but a
stronger-smelling chrism.

'Pass, O poet, retransfigured! God, the
psychometric rhapsode,
Fills with fiery rhythms the silence, stings
the dark with stars that blink;
All eternities hang round him like an old
man's clothes collapsed,
While he makes his mundane music—AND
HE WILL NOT STOP, I THINK.'

THE PERSON OF THE HOUSE.

IDYL CCCLXVI.

THE ACCOMPANIMENTS.

1. THE MONTHLY NURSE.
2. THE CAUDLE.
3. THE SENTENCES.

THE KID.

1. THE MONTHLY NURSE.

THE sickly airs had died of damp;
Through huddling leaves the holy chime
Flagged; I, expecting Mrs. Gamp,
Thought—'Will the woman come in time?'

Upstairs I knew the matron bed
Held her whose name confirms all joy
To me; and tremblingly I said
'Ah! will it be a girl or boy?'
And, soothed, my fluttering doubts began
To sift the pleasantness of things;
Developing the unshapen man,
An eagle baffled of his wings;
Considering, next, how fair the state
And large the license that sublimes
A nineteenth-century female fate—
Sweet cause that thralls my liberal rhymes!
And Chastities and colder Shames,
Decorums mute and marvellous,
And fair Behaviour that reclaims
All fancies grown erroneous,

Moved round me musing, till my choice
Faltered. A female in a wig
Stood by me, and a drouthy voice
Announced her—Mrs. Betsy Prig.

2. THE CAUDLE.

SWEET Love that sways the reeling years,
The crown and chief of certitudes,
For whose calm eyes and modest ears
Time writes the rule and text of prudes—
That, surprised, stoops a nuptial head
Nor chooses to live blindly free,
But, with all pulses quieted,
Plays tunes of domesticity—
That Love I sing of and have sung
And mean to sing till Death yawn sheer,
He rules the music of my tongue,
Stills it or quickens there or here.
I say but this: as we went up
I heard the Monthly give a sniff
And 'if the big dog makes the pup—'
She murmured—then repeated 'if!'
The caudle on a slab was placed;
She sniffed it, snorting loud and long;
I fled—I would not stop to taste—
And dreamed all night of things gone wrong.

3. THE SENTENCES.

I.

ABORTIVE Love is half a sin;
But Love's abortions dearer far
Than wheels without an axle-pin
Or life without a married star.

II.

My rules are hard to understand
For him whom sensual rules depress;
A bandbox in a midwife's hand
May hold a costlier bridal dress.

III.

'I like her not; in fact I loathe;
Bugs hath she brought from London beds.'
Friend! wouldst thou rather bear their growth
Or have a baby with two heads?

IDYL CCCXVI.

THE KID.

My spirit, in the doorway's pause,
Fluttered with fancies in my breast;
Obsequious to all decent laws,
I felt exceedingly distressed.

I knew it rude to enter there
With Mrs. V. in such a state;
And, 'neath a magisterial air,
Felt actually indelicate.
I knew the nurse began to grin;
I turned to greet my Love. Said she—
'Confound your modesty, come in!
—What shall we call the darling, V.?'
(There are so many charming names!
Girls'—Peg, Moll, Doll, Fan, Kate,
Blanche, Bab:
Boys'—Mahersshahal-hashbaz, James,
Kit, Nick, Dick, Mark, Aminadab.)
Lo, as the acorn to the oak,
As well-heads to the river's height,
As to the chicken the moist yolk,
As to high noon the day's first white—
Such is the baby to the man.
There, straddling one red arm and leg,
Lay my last work, in length a span,
Half hatched, and conscious of the egg.
A creditable child, I hoped;
And half a score of joys to be
Through sunny lengths of prospects oped
Smooth to the bland futurity.
O, fate surpassing other dooms,
O, hope above all wrecks of time!
O, light that fills all vanquished glooms,
O, silent song o'ermastering rhyme!
I covered either little foot,
I drew the strings about its waist;
Pink as the unshell'd inner fruit,
But barely decent, hardly chaste,
Its nudity had startled me,
But when the petticoats were on,
'I know,' I said; 'its name shall be
Paul Cyril Athanasius John.'
'Why,' said my wife, 'the child's a girl.'
My brain swooned, sick with failing sense;
With all perception in a whirl,
How could I tell the difference?
'Nay,' smiled the nurse, 'the child's a
boy.'
And all my soul was soothed to hear
That so it was: then startled Joy
Mocked Sorrow with a doubtful tear.
And I was glad as one who sees
For sensual optics things unmeet:
As purity makes passion freeze,
So faith warns science off her beat.
Blessed are they that have not seen,
And yet, not seeing, have believed:
To walk by faith, as preached the Dean,
And not by sight, have I achieved.

Let love, that does not look, believe;
 Let knowledge, that believes not, look:
 Truth pins her trust on falsehood's sleeve,
 While reason blunders by the book.

Then Mrs. Prig addressed me thus;
 'Sir, if you'll be advised by me,
 You'll leave the blessed babe to us;
 It's my belief he wants his tea.'

LAST WORDS OF A SEVENTH-RATE POET.

BILL, I feel far from quite right—if not
 further: already the pill
 Seems, if I may say so, to bubble inside me.
 A poet's heart, Bill,
 Is a sort of a thing that is made of the tender-
 est young bloom on a fruit.
 You may pass me the mixture at once, if you
 please—and I'll thank you to boot
 For that poem—and then for the julep. This
 really is damnable stuff!
 (Not the poem, of course.) Do you snivel,
 old friend? well, it's nasty enough,
 But I think I can stand it—I think so—ay,
 Bill, and I could were it worse.
 But I'll tell you a thing that I can't and I
 won't. 'Tis the old, old curse—
 The gall of the gold-fruited Eden, the lure
 of the angels that fell.
 'Tis the core of the fruit snake-spotted in the
 hush of the shadows of hell,
 Where a lost man sits with his head drawn
 down, and a weight on his eyes.
 You know what I mean, Bill—the tender and
 delicate mother of lies,
 Woman, the devil's first cousin—no doubt by
 the female side.
 The breath of her mouth still moves in my
 hair, and I know that she lied,
 And I feel her, Bill, sir, inside me—she oper-
 ates there like a drug.
 Were it better to live like a beetle, to wear the
 cast clothes of a slug,
 Be the louse in the locks of the hangman, the
 mote in the eye of the bat,
 Than to live and believe in a woman, who
 must one day grow aged and fat?
 You must see it's preposterous, Bill, sir.
 And yet, how the thought of it clings!
 I have lived out my time—I have prigged lots
 of verse—I have kissed (ah, that stings!)
 Lips that swore I had cribbed every line that
 I wrote on them—cribbed—honour
 bright!
 Then I loathed her; but now I forgive her;
 perhaps after all she was right.

Yet I swear it was shameful—unwomanly,
 Bill, sir—to say that I fibbed.
 Why, the poems were mine, for I bought them
 in print. Cribbed? of course they were
 cribbed.
 Yet I wouldn't say, cribbed from the French
 —Lady Bathsheba thought it was
 vulgar—
 But picked up on the banks of the Don, from
 the lips of a highly intelligent Bulgar.
 I'm aware, Bill, that's out of all metre—I
 can't help it—I'm none of your sort
 Who set metres, by Jove, above morals—not
 exactly. They don't go to Court—
 As I mentioned one night to that cowslip-
 faced pet, Lady Rahab Redrabbitt
 (Whom the Marquis calls Drabby for short).
 Well, I say, if you want a thing, grab it—
 That's what I did, at least, when I took that
dansense to a swell cabaret,
 Where expense was no consideration. A
 poet, you see, now and then must be
 gay.
 (I declined to give more, I remember, than
 fifty centeems to the waiter;
 For I asked him if that was enough; and the
 jackanapes answered—*Peut-être*.
 Ah, it isn't in you to draw up a *menu* such as
 ours was, though humble:
 When I told Lady Shoreditch, she thought it
 a regular *grand tout ensemble*.)
 She danced the heart out of my body—I can
 see in the glare of the lights,
 I can see her again as I saw her that evening,
 in spangles and tights.
 When I spoke to her first, her eye flashed so,
 I heard—as I fancied—the spark whiz
 From her eyelid—I said so next day to that
 jealous old fool of a Marquis.
 She reminded me, Bill, of a lovely volcano,
 whose entrails are lava—
 Or (you know my *penchant* for original
 types) of the upas in Java.
 In the curve of her sensitive nose was a
 singular species of dimple,

Where the flush was the mark of an angel's
creased kiss—if it wasn't a pimple.

Now I'm none of your bashful John Bulls
who don't know a pilau from a pug-
garee

Nor a chili, by George, from a chopstick. So,
sir, I marched into her snuggery,

And proposed a light supper by way of a
finish. I treated her, Bill,

To six *entrées* of ortolans, sprats, maraschino,
and oysters. It made her quite ill.

Of which moment of sickness I took some
advantage. I held her like this,

And availed myself, sir, of her sneezing, to
shut up her lips with a kiss.

The waiters, I saw, were quite struck; and
I felt, I may say, *entre nous*

Like Don Juan, Lauzun, Almaviva, Lord
Byron, and old Richelieu.

(You'll observe, Bill, that rhyme's quite
Parisian; a Londoner, sir, would have
cited old Q.)

These are moments that thrill the whole spirit
with spasms that excite and exalt.

I stood more than the peer of the great Casa-
nova—you know—de Seingalt.

She was worth, sir, I say it without hesitation,
two brace of her sisters.

Ah, why should all honey turn rhubarb—all
cherries grow onions—all kisses leave
blisters?

Oh, and why should I ask myself questions?
I've heard such before—once or twice.

Ah, I can't understand it—but, O, I imagine
it strikes me as nice.

There's a deity shapes us our ends, sir, rough-
hew them, my boy, how we will—

As I stated myself in a poem I published last
year, you know, Bill—

Where I mentioned that that was the ques-
tion—to be, or, by Jove, not to be.

Ah, it's something—you'll think so hereafter
—to wait on a poet like me.

Had I written no more than those verses on
that Countess I used to call Pussy—

Yes, Minette or Manon—and—you'll hardly
believe it—she said they were all out of
Musset.

Now I don't say they weren't—but what then?
and I don't say they were—I'll bet
pounds against pennies on

The subject—I wish I may never die Lau-
reate, if some of them weren't out of
Tennvson.

And I think—I don't like to be certain, with
Death, so to speak, by me, frowning—

But I think there were some—say a dozen,
perhaps, or a score—out of Browning.

As for poets who go on a contrary tack to
what I go and you go—

You remember my lyrics *translated*—like
'sweet bully Bottom'—from Hugo?

Though I will say it's curious that simply on
just that account there should be

Men so bold as to say that not one of my
poems was written by me.

It would stir the political bile or the physical
spleen of a drab or a Tory

To hear critics assign to his hand the Con-
fessional, Bill, and the Laboratory.

Yes, it's singular—nay, I can't think of a
parallel (ain't it a high lark?)

As that Countess would say)—there are few
men believe it was I wrote the Ode to a
Skylark.

And it often has given myself and Lord Al-
bert no end of diversion

To hear fellows maintain to my face it was
Wordsworth who wrote the Excursion.

When they know that whole reams of the
verses recur in my authorized works

Here and there, up and down! Why such
readers are infidels—heretics—Turks.

And the pitiful critics who think in their paltry
presumption to pay me a

Pretty compliment, pairing me off, sir, with
Keats—as if *he* could write *Lamia*!

While I never produced a more characteristic
and exquisite book,

One that gave me more real satisfaction, than
did, on the whole, *Lalla Rookh*.

Was it there that I called on all debtors,
being pestered myself by a creditor,
(he

Isn't paid yet) to rise, by the proud appella-
tion of bondsmen—hereditary?

Yes—I think so. And yet, on my word, I
can't think why I think it was so.

It more probably was in the poem I made a
few seasons ago

On that Duchess—her name now? ah, thus
one outlives a whole cycle of joys!

Fair suppliants black as brown succeeds
golden. The poem made rather a noise.

And indeed I have seen worse verses; but
as for the woman, my friend—

Though his neck had been never so stiff, she'd
have made a philosopher bend.

As the broken heart of a sunset that bleeds
 pure purple and gold
 In the shudder and swoon of the sickness of
 colour, the agonies old
 That engirdle the brows of the day when he
 sinks with a spasm into rest
 And the splash of his kingly blood is dashed
 on the skirts of the west,
 Even such was my own, when I felt how
 much sharper than any snake's tooth
 Was the passion that made me mistake Lady
 Eve for her niece Lady Ruth.
 The whole world, colourless, lapsed. Earth
 fled from my feet like a dream,
 And the whirl of the walls of Space was about
 me, and moved as a stream
 Flowing and ebbing and flowing all night to
 a weary tune
 ('Such as that of my verses'? Get out!) in
 the face of a sick-souled moon.
 The keen stars kindled and faded and fled,
 and the wind in my ears
 Was the wail of a poet for failure—you
 needn't come snivelling tears
 And spoiling the mixture, confound you, with
 dropping your tears into that!
 I know I'm pathetic—I must be—and you
 soft-hearted and fat,
 And I'm grateful of course for your kind-
 ness—there, don't come hugging me,
 now—
 But because a fellow's pathetic, you needn't
 low like a cow.

I should like—on my soul, I should like—
 to remember—but somehow I can't—
 If the lady whose love has reduced me to this
 was the niece or the aunt.
 But whichever it was, I feel sure, when I
 published my lays of last year
 (You remember their title—The Tramp—
 only seven-and-sixpence—not dear),
 I sent her a copy (perhaps her tears fell on
 the title-page—yes—
 I should like to imagine she wept)—and the
 Bride of Bulgaria (MS.)
 I forwarded with it. The lyrics, no doubt,
 she found bitter—and sweet;
 But the Bride she rejected, you know, with
 expressions I will not repeat.
 Well—she did no more than all publishers
 did. Though my prospects were marred,
 I can pity and pardon them. Blindness, mere
 blindness! And yet it was hard.

For a poet, Bill, is a blossom—a bird—a
 billow—a breeze—
 A kind of creature that moves among men as
 a wind among trees.
 I with the heat of my heart still burning
 against all bars
 As the fire of the dawn, so to speak, in the
 blanched blank brows of the stars—
 I with my tremulous lips made pale by musi-
 cal breath—
 I with the shade in my eyes that was left by
 the kisses of death—
 (For Death came near me in youth, and
 touched my face with his face,
 And put in my lips the songs that belong to
 a desolate place—
 Desolate truly, my heart and my life, till her
 kiss filled them up!)
 I with my soul like wine poured out with my
 flesh for the cup—
 It was hard for me—it was hard—Bill, Bill,
 you great owl, was it not?
 For the day creeps in like a Fate: and I
 think my grand passion is rot:
 And I dreamily seem to perceive, by the light
 of a life's dream done,
 The lotion at six, and the mixture at ten, and
 the draught before one.

Yes—I feel rather better. Man's life is a
 mull, at the best;
 And the patent perturbator pills are like
 bullets of lead in my chest.
 When a man's whole spirit is like the lost
 Pleiad, a blown-out star,
 Is there comfort in Holloway, Bill? is there
 hope of salvation in Parr?
 True, most things work to their end—and an
 end that the shroud overlaps.
 Under lace, under silk, under gold, sir, the
 skirt of a winding-sheet flaps—
 Which explains, if you think of it, Bill,
 why I can't, though my soul thereon
 broodeth,
 Quite make out if I loved Lady Tamar as
 much as I loved Lady Judith.
 Yet her dress was of violet velvet, her hair was
 hyacinth-hued,
 And her ankles—no matter. A face where
 the music of every mood
 Was touched by the tremulous fingers of pas-
 sionate feeling, and made
 Strange melodies, scornful, but sweeter than
 strings whereon sorrow has played

To enrapture the hearing of mirth when his
 garland of blossom and green
 Turns to lead on the anguished forehead—
 'you don't understand what I mean'?
 Well, of course I knew you were stupid—
 you always were stupid at school—
 Now don't say you weren't—but I'm hanged
 if I thought you were quite such a
 fool!
 You don't see the point of all this? I was
 talking of sickness and death—'
 In that poem I made years ago, I said this—
 'Love, the flower-time whose breath
 Smells sweet through a summer of kisses and
 perfumes an autumn of tears
 Is sadder at root than a winter—its hopes
 heavy-hearted like fears.
 Though I love your Grace more than I love
 little Letty, the maid of the mill,
 Yet the heat of your lips when I kiss them'
 (you see we were intimate, Bill)
 'And the beat of the delicate blood in your
 eyelids of azure and white
 Leave the taste of the grave in my mouth
 and the shadow of death on my sight.
 Fill the cup—twine the chaplet—come into
 the garden—get out of the house—
 Drink to *me* with your eyes—there's a ban-
 quet behind, where worms only carouse!
 As I said to sweet Katie, who lived by the
 brook on the land Philip farmed—
 Worms shall graze where my kisses found
 pasture!' The Duchess, I may say, was
 charmed.
 It was read to the Duke, and he cried like a
 child. If you'll give me a pill,
 I'll go on till past midnight. That poem was
 said to be—Somebody's, Bill.
 But you see you can always be sure of my
 hand as the mother that bore me
 By the fact that I never write verse which
 has never been written before me.
 Other poets—I blush for them, Bill—may
 adore and repudiate in turn a
 Libitina, perhaps, or Pandemos; my Venus,
 you know, is Laverna.
 Nay, that epic of mine which begins from
 foundations the Bible is built on—
 'Of man's *first* disobedience'—I've heard it
 attributed, dammy, to Milton.
 Well, it's lucky for them that it's not worth
 my while, as I may say, to break spears
 With the hirelings, forsooth, of the press who
 assert that Othello was Shakespeare's.

When he that can run, sir, may read—if he
 borrows the book, or goes on tick—
 In my poems the bit that described how
 the Hellespont joins the Propontic.
 There are men, I believe, who will tell you
 that Gray wrote the whole of *The
 Bard*—
 Or that I didn't write half the *Elegy*, Bill, in
 a Country Churchyard.
 When you know that my poem, *The Poet*,
 begins—'Ruin seize thee!' and ends
 With recapitulations of horrors the poet in-
 vokes on his friends.
 And I'll swear, if you look at the dirge on my
 relatives under the turf, you
 Will perceive it winds up with some lines on
 myself—and begins with the curfew.
 Now you'll grant it's more probable, Bill—as
 a man of the world, if you please—
 That all these should have prigged from
 myself than that I should have prigged
 from all these.
 I could cry when I think of it, friend, if such
 tears would comport with my dignity,
 That the author of *Christabel* ever should
 smart from such vulgar malignity.
 (You remember perhaps that was one of the
 first little things that I carolled
 After finishing *Marmion*, the *Princess*, the
Song of the Shirt, and *Childe Harold*.)
 Oh, doubtless it always has been so—Ah,
 doubtless it always will be—
 'There are men who would say that myself is
 a different person from me.
 Better the porridge of patience a poor man
 snuffs in his plate
 Than the water of poisonous laurels distilled
 by the fingers of hate.
 'Tis a dark-purple sort of a moonlighted
 kind of a midnight, I know;
 You remember those verses I wrote on *Irene*,
 from *Edgar A. Poe*?
 It was Lady Aholibah Levison, daughter of
 old Lord St. Giles,
 Who inspired those delectable strains, and
 rewarded her bard with her smiles.
 I recited her charms, in conjunction with
 those of a girl at the *café*,
 In a poem I published in collaboration with
 Templeton (Taffy).
 There are prudes in a world full of envy—
 and some of them thought it too
 strong

To compare an earl's daughter by name with
a girl at a French *restaurant*.

I regarded her, though, with the chivalrous
eyes of a knight-errant on quest;

I may say I don't know that I ever felt
prouder, old friend, of a conquest.

And when I've been made happy, I never
have cared a brass farthing who knew
it; I

Thank my stars I'm as free from mock-
modesty, friend, as from vulgar fatuity.

You may see by my shortness of speech
that my time's almost up. I perceive
That my new-fangled brevity strikes you: but
don't—though the public will—grieve.

As it's sometimes my whim to be vulgar, it's
sometimes my whim to be brief;

As when once I observed, after Heine, that
'she was a harlot, and I' (which is true)
'was a thief.'

(Though you hardly should cite this particu-
lar line, by the way, as an instance of
absolute brevity:

I'm aware, man, of that; so you needn't dis-
grace yourself, sir, by such grossly mis-
timed and impertinent levity.)

I don't like to break off, any more than you
wish me to stop: but my fate is
Not to write half a million such rhymes with-
out blockheads exclaiming—

JAM SATIS.

SONNET FOR A PICTURE.

THAT nose is out of drawing. With a gasp,
She pants upon the passionate lips that ache
With the red drain of her own mouth,
and make

A monochord of colour. Like an asp,
One lithe lock wriggles in his rutilant grasp.
Her bosom is an oven of myrrh, to bake
Love's white warm shewbread to a browner
cake.

The lock his fingers clench has burst its
hasp.

The legs are absolutely abominable.

Ah! what keen overgust of wild-eyed woes
Flags in that bosom, flushes in that nose?

Nay! Death sets riddles for desire to spell,
Responsive. What red hem earth's passion
sews,

But may be ravenously unripped in hell?

NEPHELIDIA.

FROM the depth of the dreamy decline of the
dawn through a notable nimbus of nebu-
lous noonshine,

Pallid and pink as the palm of the flag-
flower that flickers with fear of the flies
as they float,

Are they looks of our lovers that lustroously
lean from a marvel of mystic miraculous
moonshine,

These that we feel in the blood of our
blushes that thicken and threaten with
throbs through the throat?

Thicken and thrill as a theatre thronged at
appeal of an actor's appalled agitation,
Fainter with fear of the fires of the future
than pale with the promise of pride in the
past;

Flushed with the famishing fullness of fever
that reddens with radiance of rathe rec-
reation,

Gaunt as the ghastliest of glimpses that
gleam through the gloom of the gloam-
ing when ghosts go aghast?

Nay, for the nick of the tick of the time is
a tremulous touch on the temples of
terror,

Strained as the sinews yet strenuous with
strife of the dead who is dumb as the
dust-heaps of death:

Surely no soul is it, sweet as the spasm of
erotic emotional exquisite error,

Bathed in the balms of beatified bliss,
beatific itself by beatitude's breath.

Surely no spirit or sense of a soul that was
soft to the spirit and soul of our senses

Sweetens the stress of suspiring suspicion
that sobs in the semblance and sound of
a sigh;

Only this oracle opens Olympian, in mystical
moods and triangular tenses—

'Life is the lust of a lamp for the light that is dark till the dawn of the day when we die.'
 Mild is the mirk and monotonous music of memory, melodiously mute as it may be,
 While the hope in the heart of a hero is bruised by the breach of men's rapiers, resigned to the rod;
 Made meek as a mother whose bosom-beats bound with the bliss-bringing bulk of a balm-breathing baby,
 As they grope through the grave-yard of creeds, under skies growing green at a groan for the grinness of God.

Blank is the book of his bounty beholden of old, and its binding is blacker than bluer:

Out of blue into black is the scheme of the skies, and their dewes are the wine of the bloodshed of things;

Till the darkling desire of delight shall be free as a fawn that is freed from the fangs that pursue her,

Till the heart-beats of hell shall be hushed by a hymn from the hunt that has harried the kennel of kings.

DISGUST.

A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE.

A woman and her husband, having been converted from free thought to Calvinism, and being utterly miserable in consequence, resolve to end them selves by poison. The man dies, but the woman is rescued by application of the stomach-pump.

I.

PILLS? talk to me of your pills? Well, that, I must say, is cool.
 Can't bring my old man round? he was always a stubborn old fool.
 If I hadn't taken precautions—a warning to all that wife—
 He might not have been dead, and I might not have been alive.

II.

You would like to know, if I please, how it was that our troubles began?
 You see, we were brought up Agnostics, I and my poor old man.
 And we got some idea of selection and evolution, you know—
 Professor Huxley's doing—where does he expect to go!

III.

Well, then came trouble on trouble on trouble—I may say, a peck—
 And his cousin was wanted one day on the charge of forging a cheque—
 And his puppy died of the mange—my parrot choked on its perch.
 This was the consequence, was it, of not going weekly to church?

IV.

So we felt that the best if not only thing that remained to be done
 On an earth everlastingly moving about a perpetual sun,
 Where worms breed worms to be eaten of worms that have eaten their betters—
 And reviewers are barely civil—and people get spiteful letters—
 And a famous man is forgot ere the minute hand can tick nine—
 Was to send in our P. P. C., and purchase a package of strychnine.

V.

Nay—but first we thought it was rational—only fair—
 To give both parties a hearing—and went to the meeting-house there,
 At the curve of the street that runs from the Stag to the old Blue Lion.
 "Little Zion" they call it—a deal more "little" than "Zion."

VI.

And the preacher preached from the text, "Come out of her." Hadn't we come?
 And we thought of the Shepherd in Pickwick—and fancied a flavour of rum
 Balmily borne on the wind of his words—and my man said, "Well,
 Let's get out of this, my dear—for his text has a brimstone smell."

VII.

So we went, O God, out of chapel—and gazed,
ah God, at the sea.

And I said nothing to him. And he said
nothing to me.

VIII.

And there, you see, was an end of it all. It
was obvious, in fact,
That, whether or not you believe in the doc-
trine taught in a tract,
Life was not in the least worth living. Be-
cause, don't you see?

Nothing that can't be, can, and what must be,
must. Q. E. D.

And the infinitesimal sources of Infinite Un-
ideality

Curve in to the central abyss of a sort of a
queer Personality

Whose refraction is felt in the nebulae strewn
in the pathway of Mars

Like the parings of nails Æonian—clippings
and snippings of stars—

Shavings of suns that revolve and evolve and
involve—and at times

Give a sweet astronomical twang to remark-
ably hobbling rhymes.

IX.

And the sea curved in with a moan—and we
thought how once—before

We fell out with those atheist lecturers—once,
ah, once and no more,

We read together, while midnight blazed like
the Yankee flag,

A reverend gentleman's work—the Conver-
sion of Colonel Quagg.

And out of its pages we gathered this lesson
of doctrine pure—

Zephaniah Stockdologer's gospel—a word
that deserves to endure

Infinite millions on millions of infinite Æons
to come—

"Vocation," says he, "is vocation, and duty
duty. Some."

X.

And duty, said I, distinctly points out—and
vocation, said he,

Demands as distinctly—that I should kill you,
and that you should kill me.

The reason is obvious—we cannot exist with-
out creeds—who can?

So we went to the chemist's—a highly re-
spectable church-going man—

And bought two packets of poison. You
wouldn't have done so Wait.

It's evident, Providence is not with you,
ma'am, the same thing as Fate.

Unconscious cerebration educes God from a
fog,

But spell God backwards, what then? Give it
up? the answer is, dog.

(I don't exactly see how this last verse is to
scan,

But that's a consideration I leave to the secu-
lar man.)

XI.

I meant of course to go with him—as far as
I pleased—but first

To see how my old man liked it—I thought
perhaps he might burst.

I didn't wish it—but still it's a blessed release
for a wife—

And he saw that I thought so—and grinned
in derision—and threatened my life

If I made wry faces—and so I took just a sip
—and he—

Well—you know how it ended—he didn't
get over me.

XII.

Terrible, isn't it? Still, on reflection, it might
have been worse.

He might have been the unhappy survivor,
and followed my hearse.

"Never do it again"? Why, certainly not.
You don't

Suppose I should think of it, surely? But
anyhow—there—I won't.

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